THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

T. COWEN

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THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

JAPANESE DIGGING UP MINES PLANTED BY THE RUSSIANS AT NANSHAN.

THE
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

From the Outbreak of Hostilities to the Battle of Liaoyang

BY

THOMAS COWEN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, AND PLANS

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THE Author of this book has spent many years in the Far East, and has been in the thick of the struggle since the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Japan. He was one of the War Correspondents of the *Daily Chronicle* from February to May; then, owing to the severity of the censorship, he ceased sending his despatches, but he still remained at the seat of war. The manuscript was posted to us from Seoul, in Korea, on September 14, and reached London on October 25. In order to lose no time in publishing the book, the proofs have been read here, and we must crave the reader's indulgence for any errors that may have escaped notice in the absence of revision by the Author.

Many of the illustrations are from photographs supplied by Mr. Cowen; others are from some interesting sketches sent with the manuscript without any explanatory note, but apparently the work of a Japanese artist.

For the rest we are indebted to the representatives of *Collier's Weekly*, Mr. Bulla, and others, whose enterprise has given us some remarkable and realistic scenes from the actual field of battle.

E. A.

41 & 43, Maddox Street,
November, 1904.

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THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

CHAPTER I

THE GATHERING CLOUD

THE eyes of the world were opened, and a great illusion was suddenly dispelled, by the swift and staggering blow dealt at Port Arthur last February. 'A thunderbolt from a clear sky' many called it, but it was quite the contrary; the storm-clouds had been forming plainly for fifty years, and darkening in the last decade so ominously that there ought to have been no surprise when the crash came. Japan's attack was utterly unexpected, only because the world in general, and Russia in particular, had failed to take due note of what anyone could see who heeded—namely, that Japan, whether rightly or wrongly, had come to consider herself threatened, and had for years devoted all her strength to preparations for a blow that should rid her of the menace once for all. But the world has grown so much accustomed to the idea of white races dominating all others, and overcoming them with comparative ease whenever occasion arises, that few people

seriously thought Japan would dare, even in self-defence, to strike the first blow. To attack Russia was even out of the question for a first-class European military Power; the attempt had wrecked Napoleon. A puny Asiatic people could not think of such a thing, except as a form of national suicide. If Russia wished to advance, to expand, to disregard obligations or take territories, other nations could only regard her as a mighty, irresistible glacier, impelled by powers beyond human control.

But the glacier at last comes to a point where it breaks up; and it is not in the Japanese character to submit, but rather to die fighting, or choose suicide, if there is no hope whatever. The watchword of modern Japan is 'Defence'—self-preservation, or a fight to the death if there is no other way. This has been made especially plain since 1895, but it was no secret prior to that—in fact, through all the lifetime of the re-awakened nation. She had felt that the whole world was against her in the first days of her unwilling acquaintance with it. The ancient Japan was rudely put out of existence by the Allied Powers, and a new-born nation was forced into the world at the point of the bayonet. The whole of her young life was darkened by the shadow of the Foreign Peril until after the allied forces withdrew, and then arose instead the Russian Peril, year by year pressing more closely. Each new move was a new menace. The climax came in 1891, when the huge Siberian Railway scheme was announced. Russia openly declared her determination to dominate the Far East; Japan sternly, desperately, resolved not to be dominated. In effect, the war of 1904 was declared in 1891.

Photos by Ruddiman Johnston.

GENERAL KUROKI. GENERAL NOZU.

MARSHAL OYAMA.

ADMIRAL TOGO. GENERAL OKU.

In that year I was in Japan, and saw some of the perturbation caused by the news of the transcontinental railway scheme. It meant bringing to Japan's very doors the whole fighting force of the most feared Power in the world—a Power already responsible for the destruction of innumerable nations, and a destruction involving peculiarly complete obliteration of national existence. The very name of Vladivostok—'Lord of the East'—was of ill-omen; the port looks out on Japan, and on nothing else, as Sevastopol looks out only on Turkey; and, as the creation of a naval force in the Black Sea leads Russia to covet the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and to make Turkey's life a constant misery, in the same way Vladivostok, shut in the land-locked Sea of Japan and barricaded by the Island Empire, could only be of real value if Japan could be reduced to obedience in some way. Already Japan had had several very unpleasant experiences with Russia; and now this railway was avowedly intended by the Russian Government to be a strictly military line, an irresistible weapon with which to win the sovereignty of the Orient. It was a huge scheme, the biggest in the whole world, and its cost would reach a fabulous figure. There could not but be some tremendous purpose in it; it seemed to aim straight at Japan. It might perhaps be meant to aim at China or India, America or Australia, but Japan stood in the direct line of fire. And Russia certainly was one of the worst of the all-devouring white nations.

However much we may deprecate Russophobia, or any phobia, deprecating alone is of little use, so long as there is a real menace; and if the menace is only imaginary, it is equally useless to offer mere verbal

assurances to an alarmed populace: the fact must be allowed to make itself known in actions.

An extraordinary and most deplorable proof of Japanese feeling towards Russia was given in 1891, in connection with the Siberian Railway. The present Tsar, then Tsarevitch, came to the Far East to cut the first sod for the transcontinental railway at Vladivostok. He came by sea, and was escorted by six Russian warships—quite a formidable squadron for the Pacific in those days. As a strange irony of fate, it is interesting to note that among the six were the *Koreyetz*, the first ship to be sunk in 1904, and the *Manjour*, the first to take refuge in disarmament—these two names being the Russian for Korea and Manchuria, the objects of the war. The squadron visited Japan, and caused much excited comment, for it seemed to the Japanese to point out anew to them the danger of Russian domination of the East. While the Tsarevitch was seeing the sights in the vicinity of Lake Biwa, he was suddenly attacked by a man named Tsuda Sanzo, who inflicted a slight sword-cut on the Russian Prince before being disarmed.

It was a crazy outrage, the result of too much brooding over the Russian Peril. The universal outburst of denunciation and deep regret throughout Japan, together with the expressions of sympathy for the wounded visitor, quite hid from view the significance of the attack. Of course, there can be no excuse for such outrages, but while condemning, we should give some thought to the cause at the root. Since nothing comes of nothing, the ætiology of crime, especially political, forms an important factor of human progress. 'Without political significance' is too often the cry of

the blind. The long-standing antagonism of Russia and Japan, culminating in the appalling slaughter of 1904, might have been nipped in the bud in 1891 if the Tsarevitch had thought less of his clip on the head and more of the man who did it. A real danger should never be overlooked, even though a man sin unpardonably in his manner of pointing it out. Tsuda Sanzo was an officer with a good record, a model of discipline previously, an intelligent and educated man of decent class. Such a man does not deliberately sacrifice everything in the world for nothing. He thought, as thousands did, that his country was threatened by Russia generally, and by this railway and the Tsarevitch's squadron more particularly; and he thought, as many have thought in all countries and all ages, that he was doing a noble act in sacrificing himself to call his countrymen's attention to the danger, and to let the Russians know the Japanese spirit.

As usual in such cases, the outrage had not the effect it was intended to have, but rather the contrary; it reduced to silence, for very shame, all who would have spoken reasonably of the Russian Peril, and it gave the present ruler of Russia a lifelong conviction that the Japanese are a dangerous race. In fact, the act of Tsuda Sanzo helped to popularize throughout the Western world the outcry against the Yellow Peril. This effect was intensified when a very similar attack was made on Li Hung-chang in 1895, at Shimonoseki, during the negotiations for the cession of Port Arthur to Japan. Again the intending assassin thought to do his country a service by removing, in a merely mediæval way, a dangerous man. The Tsarevitch

Nicholas had just become Tsar, and this affair in Shimonoseki must have appealed to him as it could not to any other. As if to remind him again, a year or two later, the Kaiser sent his famous cartoon to the Tsar, and the nations of Europe were confirmed in their combined action against the Yellow Peril, and against Japan.

It is undeniable that the Japanese in certain moods are as terrible as anyone can paint them. All the varying phases of the 'desperate' side of their character can be traced to some idea of repelling attack, not of attacking. Under provocation, or under apprehension of danger, they are liable to develop a volcanic temper comparable with Mont Pélée in fury and utter destructiveness. One phase of this defensive instinct is excessive patriotic devotion, appearing in various forms, which we should call fanatical, sometimes merely fantastic in its effects, sometimes worse. For example, in floods or other disasters, I have known of men leaving children to perish, but saving the Emperor's portrait; and public opinion has commended them. Another phase is the very characteristic 'seppuku,' commonly known to foreigners as 'hara-kiri.' It is simply the extreme stage of an unyielding spirit. And apart from this self-destruction, there are innumerable instances of a similar spirit, such as that of the 'One-eyed General,' Baron Yamaji, who in childhood was rebuked by his mother for rubbing his eye too much on a dusty day, and promptly pulled out the eye and threw it away, rather than let the dust get the better of him.

In many ways the Japanese show a tendency to go to extremes which we should consider verging on

madness at times ; but it is always traceable to the idea of refusing to submit, or of defending the country or the ruler, or to some form of pressure from outside. It is not found in a spontaneous form, prompted by aggressive or acquisitive desires unconnected with necessity. If the all-pervading motive were not so wholly defensive, it would indeed be a menace to the world. There is in the Japanese a deep-rooted disinclination to make any effort when not forced. It is like the indolence of a cat—if driven to fight, a cat is the fiercest of all animals, and can often get the better of an antagonist whom it would never have wished to attack. But when not under pressure of necessity, the cat prefers to do nothing. In the Japanese we may call this feeling laziness, or philosophic calm, or lack of ambition, or Spartan simplicity of desires ; all these are phases of the national character.

It is the difference between East and West. The Anglo-Saxon does much that he need not do ; the Japanese does usually nothing if he can get along without it. He prefers to rest content. The insatiable disposition, be it in money-getting or in political ambition, in conquest or in any other form of human effort, does not seem to exist in the Japanese. In the West we are accustomed to note that a man who has worked hard, be it on sea or land, in peace or war pursuits, in town or country, finds himself unable to stop ; he no longer needs to do anything, yet he must keep at it, for his nature will not let him rest. Not that we are all insatiable, but it is our leading characteristic as a nation. The old Vikings could not settle —they had to rove. And our people since those days have been ever on the move, discovering lands which

we did not want, conquering peoples whom we would rather have left alone, doing everything in the world that we might have left undone. One of our commonest typical sayings is about Alexander of Macedon crying for more worlds to conquer, and we apply the phrase, in an admiring sense, to any person whose activities continue unnecessarily. Bismarck eulogized the 'divine discontent' of the race; and the West finds fault with the East for being easily contented. 'If they get enough to keep them going, they will not trouble themselves any further,' we say of Orientals, as if it were a sin. It is the saving of Europe from the possibility of any serious Oriental menace.

The Japanese are eager to learn everything that makes for self-preservation, and it remains to be seen how far this will carry them. If Europe insists on militarism as the only hope of survival, and if we maintain the theory of world-empires, that all nations must be either devoured or devourers, then Japan will live up to the standard, if she can—and she probably can. At any rate, she is determined to keep up with the other nations in whatever may be necessary.

There is a phase of Japanese character which is practically universal, and is commonly called 'anti-foreign feeling.' It is the chief cause of the Yellow Peril alarm in Europe. Visitors to Japan notice a certain attitude which they think is enmity underlying the courtesy of the surface. It is quite common to hear a foreigner say, 'The Japanese are eager to learn all they can from us, get as much as possible out of us, and then have nothing more to do with us, for they hate us at heart.' I cannot see it in this light, and I have tried to understand it for fifteen years. Eager to

learn? Yes, eager to get what they can, like the rest of men. Hate? No! But there is a strong defensive instinct, and a vivid recollection of past unpleasantnesses, developing an extreme degree of caution lest such things occur again. In London, Paris, New York, men trick and trap one another when they can, and we think it rather a good joke, or a clever stroke of business, to take advantage as we may. The ingenuity of all white men combined has made the Japanese cautious, ever on guard, to an extent which may be unnecessary, and often is unpleasant; but it is not hate, nor prejudice: it is only the distrustfulness born of the extreme defensive instinct. If there is any real race-hatred, I can only say I have never seen it; but I have seen only too much of the effects of distrust, arising from many unfortunate experiences in the past.

But apart from the defensive instinct, I think there is less race-feeling in the Japanese than in Europeans and Americans. If Europe could have understood the purely passive tendencies of the Buddhist world, there would never have been any serious attention given to the false alarm of the Yellow Peril, and one of the contributory causes of the war would have been eliminated. The attitude of the East and of Japan towards us is chiefly of our own making. But we can seldom realize that anyone who hurts us may have an honest reason; and the Tsarevitch left Japan with probably no idea but that the Japanese are a desperately dangerous race, with an ill-concealed desire to kill white people for the mere sake of killing them. From that time his Government has consistently followed a policy of repressing the Japanese, and has influenced other Governments in the same direction.

It has probably never occurred to the Tsar, or to others who control the destinies of European Powers, that the peoples of Asia regard the white races as devouring monsters, all-destroying as Death itself. We are in the habit of believing ourselves rather beneficent, and full of goodwill to all men, especially to brown and other races, who have not had our advantages. Hence we are often blind to the fact that our acts cause deep resentment and will react against us in due course.

Japan has always had a desire to be left in peace and to leave other nations in peace. 'Live and let live' is the keynote of the seclusion policy pursued for ages; and the principle has only become more deeply ingrained by the events of history. The whole world now forbids seclusion on the part of any nation, and finds an excuse to abolish it absolutely wherever found. The only other method of self-preservation is to be strong, and to prove it. The law of national existence is, in fact, like the law of blockade: unless there is sufficient force to uphold the claim, it is invalid.

Japan was invaded by hordes of Mongol Tartars under Kublai Khan, in the thirteenth century, and the memory of that time has left as deep and lasting an impression on the nation as the Spanish Armada left in England or the invasion of the Huns in Central Europe. Japan has always shrunk from all possibilities of foreign entanglements. In the sixteenth century the conquerors of Mexico and Peru made their way to the Philippines, and thence to Japan. In the archives of Manila there used to be the original document in which the Pope authorized certain Spanish

priests, soldiers, and traders to go to Japan, and to Christianize and get possession of the country in the name of the Church of Rome and the King of Spain. This is how the whole of the South American Continent and half of the Northern had been acquired; it was the same with the Philippines, and there was a similar plan for getting hold of South China. How much of this was known to the Japanese, there is no precise evidence, but in the end the priests and all their converts were ordered to be killed, and many thousands were killed, as a menace to the nation. It is a curious coincidence that European history about the same time contains a similar story of bloodshed, in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew (1572), due to religion mixing up in politics.

It was a few years after this that Japan invaded Korea. Then, as now, the Japanese were aiming at a bigger foe beyond the Korean border, and called on Korea to aid. Seoul, however, was too much under the influence of the big neighbour on the mainland, and was incited to show contempt for the little island nation. Hence Hideyoshi found it necessary to teach Korea a severe lesson, and he overran the peninsula with his armies, but he died before the contemplated expedition into Manchuria and China was ready. Since then Japan has left the mainland alone; and, though it continued to be the happy-hunting-ground of successive hordes of slaughtering savages, they all left Japan alone.

Only a few years after the withdrawal of the Japanese army from Korea, the Russians began to appear on the Pacific coast. Following on the collapse of the vast Mongol Empire of Kublai and Jenghis

Khan, which had comprised nearly all of Asia and half of Europe about the time when King John and Henry III. reigned in England, there was a return movement from the centre, east, and south-east of Europe towards Asia. Nomad tribes of Tartar and mixed blood, constantly at war with each other, gradually tended to drift towards regions where there was more room for them, and fewer and less fierce people in possession. Thus begun, the eastward movement did not take definite shape until about the time when Queen Elizabeth ruled in England. Then a Cossack chief, Ermak, led an army into Asia with the set purpose of conquering a new kingdom for the Tsar of Russia. The strong fighting tribes, Kurds and Turks and all their cousins in the south part of Central Asia, were well able to resist in those days, and Ermak followed the line of least resistance further north, across the Siberian plains, sparsely peopled by unwarlike tribes of primitive type, somewhat resembling the Lapps, and hardly more advanced than the Eskimo. The name of the country, Sibir, is simply the Russian word for 'north.'

It took a comparatively short time to extend the Russian dominion to Okhotsk and Kamtchatka, on the Pacific coast; this was accomplished by about 1630 or 1640. The Chinese Tartar countries, like the Mohammedan khanates, had been able to repel the invaders, and thus it happened that the first contact of Russians and Japanese was by way of Kamtchatka and the islands, long before the Amur region had been Russianized. When the Russians first reached the northern shores of Japan, in 1793, and wished to effect a landing, their reputation for aggressiveness

had preceded them, and they were compelled to go away without setting foot on land. Again they tried in 1804, a Russian envoy coming to Nagasaki with presents, and trying to establish intercourse between Russia and Japan. His manner was brusque and unconciliatory, and the Japanese sent him away, refusing his presents and declining to enter into any sort of relations. This was the end of Russo-Japanese intercourse prior to the opening of the country to all nations.

In 1853 an American naval force came to Japan, under Commodore Perry, to investigate some case of shipwreck. This ended the era of seclusion. The Japanese found themselves no longer able to keep foreigners away, and, indeed, quickly realized that, if they were not exceedingly careful, the foreigners might get possession of the country. Allied squadrons bombarded Japanese castles, for various reasons, and allied troops were stationed in garrison on Japanese soil, while the temper of the people was at boiling-point, and any moment might see the entire country in a blaze, which could only result in the extinction of Japan's independence by the vast superiority of foreign weapons. It was a period of trials and troubles too sore to tell now, but it was a wonderful training for the men who now guide the destinies of the Empire. Marquis Ito and his colleagues of the 'veteran statesman' group were serving their apprenticeship in those days as interpreters or under-secretaries. Besides the incessant difficulties with foreign Powers, there was a gigantic internal upheaval, in the sudden abolition of feudalism, which had for centuries been the principal support of the whole mechanism of

the State. The magnitude of this task may be understood by realizing that it took England four centuries of almost incessant warfare to get rid of the feudal barons.

The opening of Japan to the outer world was done almost entirely by the United States, Great Britain, France, and Holland. Russia was occupied with China, and managed to acquire first the provinces north of the great River Amur, then those along the south bank, then the maritime provinces down to and including Vladivostok. Suddenly a Russian warship landed a strong force on the island of Tsushima, and hoisted the Russian flag there in 1861. This followed naturally on the acquisition of Vladivostok, for Tsushima commands the channel by which Vladivostok communicates with the open ocean to the south. But Tsushima was Japanese, perhaps even before Japan was. The nation seems to be made up of a portion of the aboriginal Ainu tribes, Malay and other islanders, and Tartars from Central Asia viâ Korea; the Tartar forms the dominant factor, and probably settled in Tsushima before getting as far as Japan proper. At any rate, the seizure of the island by Russia was quite inadmissible, if Japan was to be considered as having any rights as a nation at all. Apart from acts of war, the seizure of occupied territory is only justifiable on the ground that the occupants are not fit to hold it. Sometimes this is a mere euphemism to hide the blunt truth that strong nations can ignore the rights of weak ones. But the weak one in this case was to a certain extent under the tutelage and protection of Europe and America. To allow such robbery would have made the Japanese more than ever resent foreign intrusion, and would have done great

GENERAL SAKHAROFF. GENERAL KUROPATKIN.

ADMIRAL ALEXIEFF.

GENERAL STOESSEL. ADMIRAL MAKAROFF.

harm to all concerned. The British Government therefore demanded the withdrawal of the Russians, and backed up the demand by sending a strong fleet into the neighbourhood, whereupon the island was restored to Japan. The incident served as a sharp warning to the Japanese of the Russian Peril.

In the next year there arose a dispute regarding Saghalien, a very large island which had always been regarded by the Japanese as theirs. From time immemorial it had been occupied mostly by Ainu tribes, and Japanese from the other islands came constantly to obtain fish and timber, but did not settle permanently on account of the severe winter. The Russians at first claimed the island by right of discovery. Then they claimed that it formed a part of their Amur province geographically, though it was not named in the cession of the province by China. Then they claimed that the tribes in Saghalien were not Japanese Ainu, but Siberian natives. Then they proposed a sort of joint tenure. Last of all they proposed partition, and the Japanese abandoned the negotiations as hopeless, after several years of discussion. In fact, Japan decided then that she would probably have to fight Russia some day, and that in the meantime talk was useless: right and justice were mere empty words without force behind them.

How keenly this incident has been kept in mind may be judged from recent events. Very soon after the outbreak of war in 1904, high posthumous honours were paid by the Japanese Government to men who were active in the Saghalien negotiations, and also to some who were killed in trying to defend Tsushima. This action of the authorities was cordially applauded

by the public, speaking through the Press, on the ground that 'the war of this year merely carries on, after mature preparation, the work of national defence which these men initiated; and if success comes now, their share in it must not be forgotten.' The Tokyo newspaper *Kokumin* (*People's Friend*) put the matter in a nutshell: 'It was but yesterday we were robbed because we were weak. To-day we are stronger, and can fight the robbers. To-morrow they will learn to leave us alone in peace.'

There has never been any secret about the Japanese intention to arm and train for a fight some day—a fight with the Power that has been plainly dangerous to her from the first acquaintance. In the language of international diplomacy, such intentions are not stated until the time comes to put them into effect. But in the language of budgets, the language of navy and army estimates, the language of tax burdens patiently borne by a poor peasantry, the language of educational systems carefully and cleverly framed—in fact, in every form of the language of deeds rather than words, Japan has been incessantly proclaiming her intention to fight Russia, because Russia first proclaimed her intention to swallow Japan.

All the earnest efforts of Japan to build up a modern army and navy, mercantile marine, industries and commerce, constitutional government, up-to-date education, and all the rest of it, did not mean a simple desire to imitate for the sake of imitating, or for the sake of being patted on the back. It meant, 'We have suffered bitter humiliation because we knew nothing of these things, and were not strong enough to resist the intrusion of those who did know such

things. And we are liable to suffer again, until we know enough and are strong enough in these Western matters to hold our own. Therefore we must strain every nerve to put ourselves in a position to prevent a repetition of the past.'

Japan looked out on the world in 1853 and found it stormy. Since then she has learned ever more and more of it, and has looked more into the future. She sees a lonely and difficult path before her. She is isolated among the nations; it is as if she belonged to some other planet, she is so different, and they seem so little to understand her. The nations of the West, though they may quarrel fiercely at times, are all akin, and have only family quarrels. All the Latin races are first cousins, and so are the Teuton group and the Slav group, while Latin, Teuton, and Slav are all related to each other, scarcely more apart than second cousins. Their languages are all traceable to one parent stock; their religions, though they fight so fiercely over them, all come out of Galilee. Even if we lamentably fail to attain our ideals of brotherhood and the oneness of Christendom, still there is the universal wish and tendency.

And there is a common bond, more ominous to Japan than any other: it is the universal characteristic of this great quarrelling family of white races to overwhelm all others. The red men of America are all but extinct; the black men of Africa and Australia, though they number countless millions, are but remnants of nations that have perished or are doomed; of the brown men of India, the once mighty empires of Turk, Arab, Bokhariot, some have disappeared from the face of the earth, and those not yet gone are going.

Nearer home, Japan looks anxiously to the condition of her nearest neighbours, kin perhaps, but ignorant of kinship or indifferent to it: on one side, across the water, are Filipinos, Malays, Dyaks, Maoris, for many years the mere sport of the white man, hunted by him to keep up his shooting practice, and tossed back and forth from one Power to another as chattels bought and sold; on the other side, all the Tartar and Turanian races, from Khiva to Khamtchatka, and from the Gurkhas to the Gilyaks, have been crushed under the heel of the ever-advancing white man. Those not yet absorbed outright are 'on the list' for absorption in due course, perhaps to be treated with a sort of mock deference, like the Afghans, or like the Nepalese, distant cousins of Japan, and a fine fighting-race, too; perhaps to be simply grabbed and slaughtered, like the Peruvians and Mexicans, and so many others; perhaps first Christianized and taught to decay, like the Hawaiians; perhaps charter-companied, like Borneo, or bound hand and foot in railway fetters, or enslaved and lured to destruction by some different form of bedevilment to be concocted in the future by the unending ingenuity of the European mind.

It all comes to the same thing in the end; these many tales are only variations of one unbroken story—the 'White Man's Burden.' He says it is his duty and destiny to take the whole earth, and to reduce to subjection every race that has not a strictly white skin. He talks of equality as a law of Christianity, as a principle of democracy, as a cardinal point of humanity; yet in every act, every word, every thought, where non-European races are concerned, he insists that they are not equal, but inferior, and destined to be subject

to his domination. The claim is endorsed, more or less unwillingly, but very surely, by nearly all peoples on the earth, and the map of the two hemispheres proves it. Hundreds or thousands of different peoples have been engulfed, until nothing stands up alive except this little band of islanders at the far end of a vast conquered continent. And the swallowing process has already begun on these islands. It is time to act, time to clench the teeth, to brace the nerves, to prepare for the last desperate fight, the forlorn hope of expiring Asia.

To die fighting, or to die by suicide when nothing more can be done, but in any case not to surrender, however hopeless the position may be, is a Japanese ideal which has been zealously cultivated for thousands of years; and the Japanese act up to their ideals more closely and consistently than we do. We say, 'How can a man die better than facing fearful odds?' but we say it as an interesting reminiscence of a bygone age, and we have in use nowadays the phrase 'honourable surrender.' We think it rather folly to die simply for the sake of not yielding to the inevitable. In fact, we evolve a new ideal type of war, in which mere position and manœuvre shall decide, and an army in a bad position can capitulate to avoid bloodshed. The Japanese may perhaps come to think in the same way in some future generation, but at present it does not seem possible. To them death is a comparatively light thing, but surrender is an impossibility. The honour attaching to the 'hara-kiri' helps to keep uppermost the idea that failure is worse than death. Thus Western people often say, 'The Japanese are good fighters when they are winning, but how would they be

in case of a reverse?' The answer to the question is simple: they would be all dead. There would be no question how they would act in a losing game, for they would not lose and live. Of course, I do not include temporary or incidental reverses, which frequently occur as parts of some large operation; but even in such cases often the habit of thought is too strong, and they choose death needlessly.

Thus, even if the Fates have decreed that all Asia must be subject to Europe, the national spirit would compel the Japanese to fight, if necessary, against all Europe, and against Fate, too, and to die fighting or win. And thus there is really a Yellow Peril, if Europe makes it so.

CHAPTER II

THE ATTITUDE OF JAPAN

PONDERING deeply over these problems of destiny, Japan looks doubtfully at her neighbours, Korea and China. Can anything good be made out of them? Can new life be instilled into them? The doom of Asia is already hanging over their heads. Tradition has taught them both to despise Japan, and circumstances have tinged the scorn with hate. If they will aid her in the struggle against destiny, or at least maintain a real neutrality, they will serve her purpose as buffer States or outposts. But neutrality is a mere farce if unsupported by force. Independence is a myth if not based on strength. Both China and Korea have shown themselves so weak, so blind, that they would be sure to lend themselves as the tool of the white aggressor. Japan in self-preservation must change all that, at any cost. If Korea insists on leaning on someone, then it shall be on Japan, whether Korea likes it or not. If China invites the partition of her provinces, then Japan cannot afford to let them all be taken by others for probable use against her. She is practically the sole survivor of all the non-European nations, the only one to have real power; and she has a tremendous task before her, to maintain her position after so many have failed. Her future existence may

depend on her power to drive energy into her neighbours, and drum them into some sort of shoulder-to-shoulder movement before the last of the so-called 'yellow' races go the way of the brown, red, and black men, all drawn irresistibly into the white man's smelting-furnace of 'benevolent assimilation,' from which no coloured race ever returns to life as a nation.

Japan's answer to the implied menace of the Siberian Railway scheme was a programme of naval and military preparation which many foreign critics called excessive. In those days nobody seemed to think seriously that Japan would ever attempt to defend herself against a great European Power. It was even considered (at first) out of the question for her to attempt to stand up against China. But it is nobody's duty, nor is it good policy, to sit still under an impending danger, to defer action till the blow falls, at whatever moment may be best for the enemy. And national defence must not begin and end at home. Nelson laid down the law that the only sound plan to prevent invasion is to be able to attack the enemy in his own ports; and Japan has most carefully studied the history of England, especially the naval part of it. And little by little she took more and more interest in the affairs of Korea, as opportunity offered. The peninsula was nominally under Chinese suzerainty, but in reality was almost a no-man's-land, at the mercy of any adventurer, and Russia was already profiting by China's weakness to intrigue in Korea.

Though the Koreans are supposed to be of pure Tartar stock, they are the very opposite of everything we usually understand as Tartar. They are sheepish-

ness itself. They live only to be fleeced. Though the land has immense capabilities, the Koreans do almost nothing with it, for they say it is useless to acquire wealth; the officials would rob them the more, and it is easier to remain idle than to acquire property and go to the trouble of stopping the robbery.

The Emperor himself is at once the chief robber and the greatest victim. Somebody once showed him how a piece of metal worth one cent could be stamped with a Government mark and called five cents, but he could not grasp or did not heed the fact that there needs to be a real reserve fund behind the token currency or it will depreciate. So he continues issuing token five-cent nickel coins without limit, and they continue to depreciate. The depreciation is attributed to the evil deeds of various other people, but the chief depreciation is caused by the Imperial household itself. The national treasury is now under foreign supervision, and the accounts are audited and all expenditure carefully safeguarded; but the Emperor constantly wants more money than the Budget provides for him, so he continues recklessly issuing new nickels. The Japanese have a nickel precisely the same in every way, except that the chrysanthemum stamp represents an honest gold reserve, and the coin is therefore worth its face value, while the Korean is worth about half, or less. Thus the country is made to suffer, and the Japanese get the blame, for the Koreans cannot understand.

The private funds of the Emperor are under no proper control at all, and nobody really knows how much is raised by this irregular coinage. The Palace parasites get the benefit of it chiefly. They devote their lives to the work of persuading the Emperor to grant

funds for any conceivable purpose. If it is a legitimate purpose, and the recipients are fit persons, the national treasury can be drawn upon; if the scheme or its promoters do not meet with the approval of the foreign Adviser, and he objects to the spending of taxes, then recourse is had to the private funds. That is practically the whole life of the Korean Imperial Court, from day to day and year to year. There is almost no governing of the country. The laws are shadowy and their administration is a pure auction: courtiers sell magisterial appointments; the buyers sell verdicts in court. Even the courtiers often buy their places in Court from other hangers-on, and ultimately the chief vendor of the highest offices is His Imperial Majesty. 'One must raise money somehow.'

Every function of a ruler and his government is translated into a sum in simple arithmetic, in dollars and cents. The country needs an Afforestation Department: that means a salaried appointment for some man, which in turn means that he pays a douceur to the official who promotes his scheme in the Palace; and not to one official, but to a chain of officials, beginning with some minor satellite and rising step by step to the Throne itself. The same with the Mining Department, the Agricultural Department, and any number of other things. Somebody hits on the ingenious idea of transferring the capital of Korea from Seoul to Pingyang, and building a fine big palace there. The people of Pingyang are induced to contribute as much money as possible on the ground that they will benefit in the end; the promoters of the scheme get the money, and it all goes in one way or another, and there never is a brick or a stick set up

towards the new palace, but nobody is surprised or considers it a case for protest. Somebody else put forward a scheme to start a glass-making industry in Seoul; every person in touch with the promoters, right up to the head of the Government, got a share of the 'promotion money' in the shape of presents to smooth the way, and it ended in a grant of funds from either the public treasury or the privy purse, the erection of a showy building, and no glass. The scheme is now dead. It served its purpose, which was not to make glass, but to make money. Another persuasive person induced His Majesty to believe that Korea ought to have a navy. So an order was given to a Japanese firm, the usual commissions changed hands all along the line, a ship was duly delivered, and now it is no longer wanted. It has also served its purpose.

The same sort of story could be told of almost everything in Korea—the War Department, the Posts and Telegraphs, the Home Office, the Education Department—and of many contracts and concessions for all sorts of works. There is a State theatre: the Emperor was told it would be a good thing to set up a theatre, and he was induced to assign funds. The building contractors made a good profit, paid their friends in the Palace for putting the scheme through, and there the matter ended; the building is falling into decay, for its work is done, without a single actor having ever seen the inside of it. One could promote a scheme for the establishment of a balloon service between Seoul and the North Pole, and it would go far enough to serve its purpose. It is only necessary to make friends in the right quarter. Or one could

get an appointment as Adviser to the Imperial hens on the correct way to lay eggs. The advisers for the most part are not engaged to advise: they are engaged to draw money and be quiet. Koreans do not like being advised. An expert is obtained from Europe to teach them how to make good silk. He shows them where their old way is defective, and they resent being shown; they tell him he will have his pay stopped if he does not let them alone. He asks why he was engaged, and he learns that it was because foreign Ministers always bother the Korean Government about getting someone to introduce improvements until someone is appointed. Then there is peace. There is no silk, no improvement, but Korea can no longer be pestered to give the job to anyone, now it is filled. (I believe it is not filled just now; the silk scheme has had its day.)

Friends of Korea have tried to check all this sort of thing, and it was thought that the placing of the nation's finances under responsible control would be an effective check. But the check proves only partial, since there is still enough money to be made outside of the regular revenue, and there is as brisk a trade as ever in the privacy of the Palace. The Russians adroitly stole a march on other nationalities by getting the appointment of Controller of the Household awarded to a lady who came originally as governess in the family of the Russian Minister at Seoul. Amid such a huge comedy of corruption as the Korean Court presents, it is difficult to estimate the relative importance of the various powers behind the Throne, but certainly the Matron of the Household is not the least, and the task of making any practical progress

A Korean See-saw.

Ploughing in Korea.

TWO MEN PULL AT THE ROPES, A THIRD DIRECTS THE PLOUGH-SHARE, AND THE OTHER FIVE LOOK ON.

with the country by ordinary legitimate methods is greatly hindered by these disturbing influences, since the Emperor is so completely under the control of his immediate entourage. He is swayed constantly in whatever direction means the most money for the hangers-on, and it requires unusual effort to influence him in any opposite direction.

The ideas of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Korea on the subject of money are those of the most primitive savage or the most backward infant. He regards cheques in much the same way that young brides are said to do in English comic papers. When anyone presses for payment of anything, it is only necessary to take a bit of paper, write on it 'Pay bearer so much,' and the thing is finished. His Majesty's paper, however, is difficult to negotiate. No bank cares to touch it, except at a very heavy discount. So the vendor of merchandise, or the person who has rendered services, or thinks he has, takes the Emperor's cheque to the Imperial Customs, perhaps. The head of that department is Mr. J. McLeavy Brown. It is only necessary to picture to oneself what the name typifies: a combination of John Brown, a Mac, and a Levi; a sound, reliable English gentleman, a very John Bull, with a distinct strain of canny Scot and Hebrew cleverness at finance. I think no higher ideal for a financial adviser to a hopeless spendthrift potentate could be imagined. It is enough that the many money-seeking adventurers who haunt the Seoul Court hate him as the thimble-rig artists on a racecourse hate the police. He declines to pay these 'little bills' unless he finds them justifiable.

So the holder of the note goes to the Imperial Mint,

which is busy turning out rubbishy five-cent nickel coins with no reserve behind them, and hence worth a small fraction of their face value. But even these can be negotiated if the holder of the Imperial I O U can induce the mint-master to disgorge. It means carrying away a half-ton of metal tokens for a £5 note, but there is apparently no other course. There is not even this course until after an enormous amount of labour. The mint-master is not master of the mint. He dare not honour the Emperor's cheque unless he asks somebody's permission. Sometimes he asks Lady Om, who is the Chief Concubine and hopes to be made legal Empress. If she inspects the cheque, understands what it is for, has no grievance against the payee, receives some considerable present from him to put her in good humour, and is not wanting all the available supply of nickels for herself at the moment, then the man can at last get his money, or most of it. If Lady Om will not oblige, perhaps it is Lady Hyon. She is the chief concubine of a Cabinet Minister. Yesterday he was in charge of the War Portfolio, to-day it is probably some other, and to-morrow perhaps he will be an ex-Minister. Lady Hyon has a way of ingratiating herself everywhere, and is a favourite with His Majesty, and therefore a bitter enemy of Lady Om. What one of the two will not do the other often will, for spite. A third 'power behind the Throne' is the foreign Lady Housekeeper. Her influence is so great that many of the buildings in Seoul belonging to and used by the Imperial household are in her name absolutely, and while she cannot prevent the Lady Om and Lady Hyon and the rest of them from managing business for Korean clients, she endeavours to insure

that all business between foreigners and His Majesty must pass through her hands.

What Mr. McLeavy Brown thinks of the whole arrangement, or what the Lady of the Household and her Korean rivals think of Mr. Brown and his guardianship of the national revenue, need not be stated here. It is sufficient to say that Seoul is a grotesque, sordid, and pitiable imitation of Peking in most things—there is as much corruption, in proportion to the size and wealth of the country, and the one sound and honest thing amid all the intriguing is the Maritime Customs. Formerly the Korean Customs service formed a branch of the Chinese, and Mr. McLeavy Brown is a worthy replica of Sir Robert Hart.

The Japanese Government understood better than any other that, as long as Korea remained under China's enervating influence, matters would only go from bad to worse. As far back as the sixties, Russia had shown a determination to get hold of Korea; and since then all writers on Korea, of all nationalities, had regarded it as a settled thing that Korea would in due course be Russian. Japan tried to assert her influence in 1876, and again in 1888, but was restrained by the European Powers. They did not, however, change the conditions which gave rise to Japan's uneasiness, which therefore grew greater. At last, in 1894, she insisted on asserting herself in Korea and challenging China. Few foreigners thought she had much chance of victory, but the Powers refrained from holding her back as they had done before, for they said, in effect, 'Let her get a beating; it will do her good.' It was thought her progress had been too rapid, and therefore could not be sound. She would find out the danger

of going too fast. When the Chinese were defeated again and again, there was still a widespread belief that Japan must be crushed in the end by sheer weight of numbers. When the end came, the Western world still did not realize its error of judgment, but assumed that China had not made a good fight. Having seen most of that war, I thought the Chinese made a very fair fight, and the Japanese had a harder task, and acquitted themselves better, than foreigners suspected.

This important misjudgment, on the part of Russia in particular, was one of the contributory causes of the Russo-Japanese War. I was a good deal in company with Colonel Wogack, the Russian Military Attaché with the Japanese army in Liaotung in 1894; he was a very able man, in whom his Government placed great reliance. There were only four other attachés and five foreign correspondents altogether—quite a small family party, compared with the sixty or eighty who came with a huge army of attendants in 1904. We discussed the campaign and kindred subjects from time to time, on the march or while watching a fight, or at night, when settled down in some poky little Chinese hut. Whatever was said was, of course, not intended for publication, but I think it has a historical importance that justifies some reference to Colonel Wogack's opinions. His official reports to his Government, and his voice in later consultations, must have had weight in deciding the course of events. He used to say emphatically that Port Arthur would be absolutely impregnable if properly defended by European troops, even against the best armies in the world. On this point he was almost enthusiastic, in a quiet way; he was never very communicative, but there was no

special reason for him to be reticent on a simple general proposition like that. Furthermore, he thought the Japanese troops very good, well trained, very plucky, and so on, but he felt sure they would not stand against European troops; and he thought they would become demoralized and tend to panic if they met a reverse. Finally, he thought a protracted campaign would wear them out, the troops as well as the nation, and they would 'fall to pieces.' This was not one dictum, but the sum of several casual conversations.

There were other expert opinions. Colonel Taylor, A.M.S., and Captain Du Boulay, R.A., both had experience of Indian troops, such as Gurkhas and Sikhs, and were by no means so certain about the supposed limitations of Asiatics. Moreover, they doubted the strategic value of Port Arthur, since both it and Talienwan had been carefully examined and reported upon by British experts about the time of the China War of 1861, and the verdict was that there were fatal defects about both positions.

But the fact remained that the positions had been selected as excellent by German military experts in the service of China, and British opinion was not supposed to count for much against that. The mere fact of Japan's being able to take the places might mean either that the positions themselves were bad, or that the Chinese were poor fighters, or the Japanese very good, or all three reasons might be contributory.

Apparently the Russian Government decided that the positions were good—in fact, worth having at any cost—and that the Japanese were not really able to fight Europeans.

After the Japanese took Weihaiwei in 1895, and

before China had begun seriously to sue for terms of peace, I told Colonel Wogack that I had bought a book to learn Russian, as I hoped to see the coming Russo-Japanese War, and I asked him to promise me a permit. He laughed, and said, 'There will be no such war. They would never try to fight us.' And it is true that then, and for long after, most people would have thought the idea merely laughable.

About that time I had occasion to see Marquis Ito, and while speaking of various topics I asked bluntly, 'This Russo-Japanese War which we have read about for years, when do you think it will be?' He smiled gravely at the very impossibility of the question, but went on to say, 'I understand very well what you mean. It is well known that the interests of Japan and Russia seem to threaten a conflict some day. That needs no telling nor denying. But the more an evil is predicted the more likely it is to be avoided. It is hardly necessary to say we have carefully studied all conceivable possibilities for a long time past, and I can assure you we will do our utmost to follow a policy of extreme moderation, so as to avoid any conflict with any of the great Powers. At the same time, we have our own national welfare to maintain, and if we should be attacked we must do our best according to circumstances.'

At first sight it may seem as if he had in effect said nothing. On careful consideration it may be seen that he virtually said everything. At least, he implied plainly that, before going to war with China, Japan had counted up all possibilities—including that of Russian intervention—and had thought out a line of action in each case. He spoke of going to extremes

to avoid foreign complications, and of loyally defending Japan's interests in the last resort. It seemed to mean, 'We have had our eyes on Russia all the time, and shall know what to do when the time comes.'

In all this there was no secret. Russia could have known it all. Japan wanted Port Arthur as an outpost against a national peril. To take away the outpost only intensified the sense of peril, and made the ultimate conflict more unavoidable. It might be that the alarm was exaggerated; perhaps Russia, after centuries of steady encroachment, might refrain from further encroaching. But Japan had to insist on more than a 'might be' or a 'perhaps.'

I think it is probable that Japan, in demanding the cession of Port Arthur from China, had well in mind the ambitions of Russia in that direction, and was prepared boldly to challenge them. In fact, the demand was then regarded by many as a definite challenge, and it is to be supposed that the possibility of a second war on top of the first had been carefully calculated, and the risk accepted as a probable part of the day's work. What had not been counted on was the combination of Germany and France with Russia. There was not even in France's action anything unforeseeable, but the sudden appearance of Germany as an interested party was extraordinary. France was Russia's ally, and had always taken an active part in Far-Eastern politics, but Germany had not. What had she to do with Manchuria?

The combination was strong enough to decide Japan. She might have refused to listen to Russia alone, or even Russia and France, and that evidently was Russia's own view, too. She seemed to confess

her inability to cope single-handed with Japan, for the Siberian Railway was only just begun, and the Russian fleet was not very powerful then.

Many and bitter were the newspaper articles and pamphlets published in Japan against the three Powers, and against giving up Port Arthur. Feeling ran so high that there must have been war in any country less carefully controlled. The Press censors had to work like a fire-brigade. Newspapers were suspended right and left, the prisons were filled with indignant patriots, and wherever one publication was stopped others would come to light in its place. When a printing plant was placed under lock and key, some neighbour would buy a few dollars' worth of materials and publish one defiant protest before going proudly to prison.

These publications were not all filled with wild unreasoning anger, but in many cases were thoughtful and statesmanlike expositions of the peril confronting the country. They adduced statistics showing the comparative fighting strength of countries, revenues, populations, distances, etc. They admitted that the odds would be very unfavourable, but they urged that a fight could sometimes be won even against the greatest odds, and that in certain cases it was better to try and even fail than not to try. They pointed to the past and asked, 'What of the future?' Incessant aggressions on the part of the Powers, and unlimited yielding on the part of Japan, could but mean extinction in the end, and it would be better to die honourably now, if indeed a fight against the three Powers could not be a victory. Suicide is better than dishonour—no Japanese can deny that.

Still, the Government persisted in its peace policy, despite the hot temper of the country; and, as the Japanese are, above all, loyal, they swallowed the bitter medicine at last, and became in due time outwardly tranquil. In fact, it may be said that all anger died away.

But all the people were saying to each other, 'Only wait.' They knew that, loyal as they were to their country, the Government was equally loyal, and would not permanently sacrifice the country's welfare. It was not mere *amour propre* that made them determine to regain Port Arthur and strike a fierce blow at Russia; it was the inextinguishable instinct of self-preservation. The national defence needed Port Arthur in 1895, and the need continued greater than ever because the White Peril had showed itself more vividly than ever. If a hungry man is robbed of food, it is not anger but hunger that stings him to fresh effort. The war of 1894 had been occasioned by several minor disputes about the Tonghak rebels, and the sending of Chinese troops in larger number than the treaty warranted; but these were mere details. The root-principle was that Japan needed to control the peninsula and its vicinity, as her outermost line of defence against Russian or any other encroachments, and if Korea did not choose to fall into line with Japan's ideas, then the counter-influences must be removed. These considerations were, and are, necessary to Japan's existence.

Driven out of Port Arthur, the Japanese reflected: 'We have ships, we have guns; we could have stood up against Russia, but we were beaten by an alliance. We need an alliance, too. This must not occur again.'

There was a sort of unwritten Anglo-Japanese alliance since the day when Russia was made to give back Tsushima to Japan, and was forced to give a pledge never to occupy any Korean territory or harbour. When Great Britain led the way in consenting to the revision of treaties with Japan, on a basis of equality and mutual advantage instead of the old one-sided arrangement that had been forced on Japan in the days of her weakness, Baron Myoji Ito, who was Secretary to the Cabinet of Marquis Ito, told me—not officially, but as his private idea of Japanese feeling—that the new treaty of commerce and amity was probably a stepping-stone to something in the way of an Anglo-Japanese alliance. It was seen by all that there was a bond of union, a community of interests and aims, between the two nations, and it was considered that this would in due course of time take definite shape.

The 'unwritten alliance' was certainly thought by many Japanese to be very real, and they expected Great Britain to take action in the question of giving back Port Arthur. It was a severe disappointment to them when she simply remained neutral. They were even more surprised when Admiral Alexieff was allowed to order British ships out of Port Arthur, then supposed to be again a Chinese port. Whatever may have been the motive of British policy at that period, Japan learnt not to expect too much, but to depend on herself. She must either fight her own battles or make what terms she might with the adversary. Her days of tutelage came to an end in 1894. She must in course of time try to arrange something on the lines of the Franco-Russian alliance, or the

Triplice; but these things could not be forced: they must wait their time, and meanwhile she must walk warily, and keep on good terms with the enemy. So for a while there was talk, scarcely ever very serious, of a Russo-Japanese alliance. Russia has not a good reputation in the matter of treaties, especially with Asiatic States, and Japan knew it.

After Japan had given back Port Arthur, Russia got her reward in the shape of the special railway privileges by which she planned to dominate the Far East with even more certainty than in the original scheme of the Vladivostok line. But there was some hesitation and changing of programme before the desired object could be attained. Russia could not well step into full possession of Port Arthur immediately on turning Japan out, and so the railway concession at first was only to connect the Siberian line with the Shanhaikwan line, meeting at Moukden. This was arranged in 1897 by Count Cassini, Russian Minister in Peking. Then came the murder of two German missionaries in Shantung, followed by the acquisition of Kiaochow by Germany. About this time the Kaiser sent to the Tsar the famous cartoon calling on the nations of Europe to unite against a common danger, presumably meaning the Yellow Peril. Russia responded by forcing China to give her a lease of Port Arthur, and a concession to run the railway from Moukden to that port. About the same time France obtained Kwangchauwan, in the south of China, near Hainan. Thus the intervention of the three Powers in 1895 bore fruit in 1897 and 1898.

Japan could not but feel increasing alarm at what looked like the break-up of China. But there seemed

to be no help. Her oldest friend, the United States, had just got into a war with Spain, and was learning new lessons in Imperialism. Great Britain was fully occupied with the Soudan, and a possibility of complications with France over the Upper Nile. So Japan was for the time without a friend to take any active interest in China, and she was only too glad to get the last instalment of the Chinese indemnity and withdraw from Weihaiwei, which she had occupied as security for the money. The ready cash helped her to hurry on her preparations for the storm which she saw coming ever closer. The whole white race seemed more than ever to be smitten with the craze for annexing other people's lands at this time, and Europe was talking excitedly of a general *mêlée*, on account of either Cuba or Egypt, while Russia profited by this preoccupation to do as she liked in the East, with Germany applauding and following her example.

The British lease of Weihaiwei from China followed the Russian lease of Port Arthur, and was full of meaning. It revived Japan's hope that British interests in the Far East would be less neglected, and it seemed to convey a similar hint to Russia. It may have been merely a coincidence, or it may have been a case of cause and effect, that the Tsar about this time published his memorable Peace Rescript. The Japanese took a very cynical view; they said: 'Russia got what she wanted, with the aid of France and Germany; Germany got her share of plunder; France now needs aid regarding the Upper Nile, but Great Britain shows signs of a stronger policy all round, therefore Russia proposes peace and disarmament, especially naval disarmament. We know why she says "especially

naval." These white people are very cunning, but we begin to see through them. They are all aggressive alike, and they dispute, not about who shall defend the weak, but who shall devour the most.'

Not that these things are necessarily true, but that they are now deeply implanted in the minds of Far-Eastern peoples, especially Chinese and Japanese, and nobody can root them out. They directly caused the Boxer outbreak, which produced two important results: the Russians seized on the excuse to take and try to keep Manchuria, while the Japanese seized the opportunity to press on Great Britain and other Powers the necessity of preserving China's integrity. Hence arose, first, the Anglo-German agreement, proclaiming the doctrine of the integrity of China; and then, when Germany refused to adhere to this in its entirety, there resulted the Anglo-Japanese alliance, which reasserted the same principle in a stronger form. Russia at first professed to endorse the principle, but afterwards trampled on it. I think all this was pretty well foreseen by the Japanese statesmen at the outset of the Boxer campaign, and the course of events since then has followed very closely the line of their anticipations.

At the outset of the Boxer campaign I had an interview with Marquis Ito again. It is to be remembered that, from the time when he worked his passage to London in a British ship, and returned to become a secretary and interpreter in the Government service in the most troublous times of Japanese history, he has been more than any other man a central figure in the struggles of the young nation for half a century, and his strenuous life makes one of the most marvellous stories in the book of nation-building; and when he

speaks, he seems to sum up, in a brief mental survey, all the stirring scenes and illumining experiences of the past, viewed through the earnest, kindly eyes of an old man and an intellectual giant.

He had known me before, when I was for *The Times;* now I was for the *Daily News*, and he chatted for a few minutes about the difference between the two. He was well acquainted with them, their policies and *personnel*, and compared their Japanese namesakes, *Jiji* and *Nichi-nichi.* (Intelligent party divisions, to examine fully both sides of every question, constitute the only healthy form of governing a country, and Japan has been diligently learning this for a generation.) Then he went on to tell me as much as his position allowed him regarding the Boxer affair, from Japan's point of view. He said: 'We Japanese can naturally understand China better than Europeans can. We feel exactly as you do about the horror of these outrages, but we can see the cause. Nothing good or bad can happen without a cause, and it is not enough to deal only with the fact itself; it is more important to get to the root of it.' The Chinese, like the Japanese of fifty years ago, wished only to be left alone in peace, and took alarm on account of the rough ways of some of the foreign intruders. 'But we were fortunate in having to deal with only two or three Powers, and they proved real friends. China has more to deal with, and does not distinguish well between friends and enemies.' Simple words, with a world of meaning.

He went on to say that the Chinese knew, vaguely for the most part, how their outlying provinces one by one had been taken away, and they heard that their Emperor was a weak youth inclined to yield to foreign

influences. Their country's history showed how weak Emperors had at times betrayed the nation. Thus they took alarm, and the only wonder was that it was hitherto confined practically to Shantung and Chihli provinces. Undoubtedly all the other fifteen provinces were greatly disturbed by the 'simultaneous aggressive mood' displayed by all the Powers; even the Americans, previously a model for Europe, had now overcome their scruples, and begun by taking the Philippines, Hawaii, and other islands. Germany had openly shown a desire to partition China into spheres of influence, while the Kaiser spoke of 'repaying the scourge of Attila.' China was seized with panic. It was intended as a movement of national defence, but, like all panics, it was fierce, cruel, blind, without plan, without heed to consequences, without judgment, without thought of friends or innocents—in fact, it was a madness ghastly beyond description. Still, it originated in a just cause, the right of self-preservation. Europe, forgetful of having given provocation, saw only so many million savage beasts bent on destruction without reason, but the Japanese saw differently. Europe was afraid all China would be infected; Japan understood how it might, and how it could, be prevented.

Marquis Ito felt that the Boxer excesses were condemned by the rest of China as a whole; he was personally very friendly with several of the greatest men of China, and felt strongly that the surest way to keep the rest of China from turning Boxer was to convince the people that they need not fear further aggression. He hoped the Press would do its share in making England and Europe understand the true

necessities of the time. Dreadful as were the murders of missionaries and of innocent women and children, they were not due to any special feeling against the individuals, but against foreign aggression generally; and in all our strongest condemnation of such barbarous methods we should remember how long it took Europe to learn not to kill women and children in the name of a principle. But, he added, these were considerations for a later day; the first thing now, and the only thing at first, was to rescue.

As to this, I asked why Japan should not hurry troops up to Tientsin and Peking at once, and save all the foreigners without waiting for other countries to send troops, seeing that there was not a day to lose. It would have been easy, and all the world was asking why Japan waited. He said it was true Japan could rescue the besieged people long before any other Power could get an adequate force to the spot, but there were conflicting considerations. 'I must not say anything about the reasons or the negotiations, of course; but, as you know, some people are jealous of Japan's progress, and think we might take too much credit, perhaps want too much reward. We do not want reward.' I think he meant there were others who did. He went on to say, 'We must be careful not to put ourselves forward too much; we are prepared to do exactly what Europe will give us a mandate to do, but without that we do not wish to move.' Finally he said, 'When we fought China before, others got most of the benefit; but you need not publish that.' I suppose there is no harm now.

As to the future, Marquis Ito expected that the suppression of the Boxers would not be very difficult,

if the rest of China could be reassured. But he was very urgent on that point, and hoped the British Press would insist on it strongly, that the integrity of China must be guaranteed, or the country might at any moment be all in a blaze. He asked me a good deal about the Occidental view, and said, 'We in the East know fully the Eastern side, and the West knows the Western side, but much depends on the Press accurately interpreting to the West the Eastern side, and to the East the Western.' And, 'I know you; I think you understand about these things very well.'

The integrity of China was what the Boxers meant to fight for, and it is what Japan made up her mind to fight for—not in benevolence to China, but in defence of Japan, just as Great Britain has intimated plainly her intention to fight Russia for Afghanistan, if necessary, in defence of India.

But it must be admitted that China has done much to deserve partition, by her sins both of omission and of commission. Especially her outlying provinces in the north and west have been neglected, and left in such a backward condition that it is a practical impossibility to let matters remain as they are. To establish law and order in place of utter lawlessness, to promote education in regions of abject ignorance, to create well-watered and cultivated fields out of bare sand-wastes, to make roads and railways where there was no communication—these are duties of each nation in its own territory; and a nation failing in its duty is liable to pay the penalty in having the duty performed by others. Japan in the first few years of foreign intercourse saw this, and hastened to supply the material needs of the country according to modern

ideals; China must see and do the same, or somebody will do it for her. Integrity of territory, if it is to be anything more than nominal, implies certain duties and penalties. Independence and sovereignty become mere fictions if not supported by force and put to a healthy use, since the proper utilization of resources is the foundation of strength. These principles are so ignored by China as to afford considerable justification for the Russian policy in Manchuria—I mean for the determination to enter into the land and do the things which the Chinese have left undone. It would have been well if Russia had said this frankly at the outset, and arranged accordingly with everybody concerned, instead of continually denying her intentions.

CHAPTER III

THE RUSSIAN POINT OF VIEW

During the Boxer campaign I had some opportunity of becoming acquainted with many Russians, chiefly army officers, and learning their views regarding China and Japan. Many of the officers speak English or French, and they are usually very pleasant. In fact, so far as my knowledge goes, the Russian can be one of the best fellows in the world. And, since I have done my best to explain the Japanese side of the question, it is necessary also to do justice to the Russian side.

Of Russian expansion generally there is undoubted justification. It is necessary because Russia is really overcrowded, and much misery results. The population is not as congested as in a manufacturing country, but it is almost entirely agricultural, and much of the land is poor. There must be more land found for the people. And though Siberia looks immense on the map, mere vacant space is useless; mere land is useless. It must be land that will support life. Men cannot eat the soil. There must be water: vast stretches of dry steppe country in European and Asiatic Russia are of little use, for there are no streams within many miles, and the rainfall often fails. And, given land and water, the peasant needs

clothes, tools, and so on; in fact, he needs a market where he can sell his corn and buy goods. So there may be abundance of fertile land too remote to be used.

Siberia could be made into a paradise, in course of time, if it was not all so remote, so cut off from everywhere. Writers compare it with Canada; but in Canada one can cross the border anywhere into the United States, one can be in touch with the whole outer world at any point. Siberia has along its southern frontier the mightiest mountain barriers in the world, extending thousands of miles, from Afghanistan to the Amur. It is as if the whole Rocky Mountain range of North America, with the Sierras thrown in, had been laid from east to west, to isolate Manitoba and Winnipeg. It is worse, for Vancouver is open winter and summer, and so is Halifax at the other end, and only five days are taken in crossing; Siberia has no ice-free port (in all Russia there is hardly one), and the railway transit is twenty days or more

'But here,' a Russian would say, 'is a fertile country, occupied by people who do not use it properly, and never will, as long as they are left to themselves. Why not take it? It was your English Lord Salisbury who said, "Some nations are increasing and expanding, some are decaying and dying. It is the law of the universe and cannot be changed." China is dying: the British took Burmah, the French Tonkin, the Japanese Formosa, the Germans Shantung, and in course of time all China will be taken, like all Africa.'

It is objected that Russia does not throw her territories open to the trade of all nations, as Great Britain

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

RUSSIAN TROOPS MASSING BEFORE A FIGHT ON THE HEIGHTS.

does. But that is an easy thing to do if a nation is already of enormous commercial strength. It is like a giant admitting children into his house. 'You English would not do it, if you found there were others cleverer than you in business who could come in and take everything from you. You would soon cry out. We Russians know we are not a good business people, but we do not set up much protection. Not enough, for, as it is, nearly all the best concerns in Russia are in German or British hands, so you have not much cause of complaint.'

The British usually say that they do not wish to take other people's territories, but are forced by circumstances against their will. This is amusing to Russians. One, a well-known man in Tientsin, quoted Shakespeare to me: 'Master, I marvel how the fishes live i' the sea. . . . Why, as men live a-land; the great ones eat up the little ones.' It is all compulsory, involuntary — call it fate, or necessity, or destiny, or the will of God. So the Russian regards it.

Siberia has its tales of convict horrors, so has Australia, and in both cases, no doubt, men have been villains; but the nation is not to blame so long as it does its best to remedy evils as they come to light. Saghalien prisons are no worse than Botany Bay was. Many men claim to have been sent into exile for no fault, and it may be true; all countries have had such things happen in their time, and afterwards a brighter era dawns. Officials in remote places are apt to develop failings, and all wild lands in the infancy of their development have to pass through a period full of black spots. There are big frauds and shoals of little peculations; there are brutes in uniform and

tyrants in authority, spendthrift ne'er-do-weels who are not fit for their posts, but have been sent out by the influence of friends—all these things are found in Siberia, it is true, as they have been found in other parts of the world. And as for killing the natives, Geok Tepe can compare with Omdurman, Bokhara with Buluwayo. That is to say, the Russian claims that it can. Blagoveschensk was not mentioned in these conversations to which I refer, because the massacre there had not been fully reported at this time; but in conversation with Russians since I have found that there is something to be said even about that.

It is easy for English people to be wise after the event, and say that the Russians at Blagoveschensk were not in real danger, and the Chinese who were killed were all harmless; but it must be remembered that the history of the Amursky province records some sudden attacks of precisely the nature that this really seemed to be, resulting in massacres of Russians comparable with our own terrible memories of Cawnpore. One of the earliest stations, Albazin, was completely destroyed and every Russian killed over 200 years ago, and all Russian settlements along the Amur were exterminated. Since then there have been other sudden risings, with similar results, and all these arose to mind at once when the first few shots were fired by the Chinese. It is true they were only a few shots, but one need not wait to be killed before taking alarm. And in alarm one cannot be particular; it was necessary to get rid of all the Chinese at once, or at any rate it seemed at that time perfectly necessary, and there was no alternative but to drive them out, and let them take

their chance of getting across the river. There was no time to discuss how, or to listen to protests. If the soldiers were rougher than they might have been, many of them were Siberian levies—Tartars, Kalmucks and Buriats—and their ways are half wild. If many innocent Chinese suffered, that was nothing more than must occur in such times—nothing more than occurred in Tientsin, where undoubtedly many women and children and non-combatant men were victims of the bombardment by the Allies. In short, the Blagoveschensk incident is considered by the Russians to have been mainly unavoidable, and while it is recognised as deplorable, it has been much exaggerated, according to their idea.

Most of the Russians seemed to be frankly of the opinion that the whole of Manchuria and Mongolia and part of North China must become Russian some day, in the natural order of things, just as the British and others had seen no wrong in spreading themselves over vast areas of other continents. As for treaties or promises standing in the way, Russians urge that it is international usage to find a way out of even the most solemn pledges and obligations, if need arises; and they quote the action of England in Egypt, France in Tunis, and so on, not as counter-accusations, but as proofs of what they consider the general practice.

To sum up, from all conversations I have had with Russians it must be admitted that they can defend most of their actions by precedents from the empire-building records of other nations. Not that two wrongs make a right, but that the Russian says these things are not wrong.

Of Japan we used to speak occasionally. All the

Russians I have met seemed to have about the same opinion. Japan, they said, was going ahead too much, and would be a danger to the world if not soon checked by someone; the Powers that encouraged Japan were making a grave mistake. Many circumstances point to the probability of China's being induced in time to follow in Japan's footsteps, and that is a contingency to be studied carefully. At present China is a profitable field for foreigners; the bulk of the coast and river steamship trade, the banking, most of the railway and mining concessions, cotton and other mills, a vast quantity of insurance and other commercial undertakings—all these are in foreign hands in China, but are not so much, or not at all, open to foreigners in Japan. In some things, especially in the holding of land, which is an important stepping-stone to the introduction of foreign capital for all sorts of purposes, Japan establishes an absolute prohibition; in other things, she does all she can to stimulate her own people to compete with the foreigner. Nobody can blame Japan for doing all this, but China is better for foreigners as she is. Japan, therefore, should not be allowed to get so much influence over China.

Besides the commercial, there is the political future to consider. Imagine a Chinese Empire as much Westernized and reorganized as Japan, imbued with the Japanese spirit towards foreign nations; the possibilities are little short of sensational. Here is the Yellow Peril spectre at its worst. For instance, the murder of two Germans in Shantung caused the seizure of Kiaochow; with a regenerate China, the murder of two coolies in California would mean the seizure of San Francisco. Misgovernment and disorder in a

dependency of China such as Burmah, Tonkin, etc., caused the seizure of the dependency by foreigners; with four hundred million Chinese, thoroughly Westernized as far as the arts of war go, but retaining their traditional feelings towards foreigners, how many misgoverned colonies of European Powers in the Far East would qualify for 'just and necessary intervention'? In short, say the Russians, this regeneration and Westernization of the Orient is dangerous. If Asiatics are allowed to learn our methods and practise them on us, they must be stopped before going too far. It is not a practical argument to say that we ought to change our methods if we are not willing to have them practised on us, for it is the law of the universe that one must rule, another must serve; one must prey, another must suffer; and, though we may argue, theorize, and preach all sorts of contradictory things, it is necessary, if we are to survive at all, that we must do to others as we would not others should do to us.

So there must be certain subject races, according to this line of reasoning, and there is nothing contrary to Christianity or to humanity in holding that there must be a master to rule and a servant to serve. Asia is to serve, Europe is to rule; and Japan, in trying to rank as one of the ruling Powers, is getting out of her depth, in the opinion of many honest judges. Her progress, they say, is too rapid to be sound, her learning and cleverness cannot be more than superficial, and her fitness to rank among the first-class nations is a false pretence.

Thus I have tried to state fairly the view of a certainly large section of Europeans and Americans,

and it is a view so sincere and deep-rooted that it cannot be argued away. Many friends of Japan and many Japanese are prone to think these arguments are not put forward in good faith, but are merely a cloak for prejudice or other unworthy sentiments. Doubtless there are on both sides some biassed or interested partizans, but neither side can have altogether a monopoly of truth and justice.

It is clear to my mind that the British promises to evacuate Egypt were broken, and that to keep them would have been to do a great wrong for the sake of a pledge that ought not to have been given ; and we are therefore well qualified to imagine ourselves, in Russia's place, saying the same about Manchuria.

At the outset of the Boxer campaign the Powers agreed not to steal marches on each other, but I heard Russians saying openly, 'We do not care so much about the relief of Peking ; we have more important business of our own in Manchuria.' And when it was noticed that the Russians had not as many troops on the relief expedition as had been expected, they said : 'We are bringing the rest overland through Manchuria, to approach Peking from the north : it is important to attend to the intervening country.' There were reports of enormous numbers of Russians pouring into Manchuria, 'and wherever they come in they will never go out again.' How seriously they meant this we could know from several incidents, notably their move to the Summer Palace in spite of an international agreement to leave it alone, and their stubborn insistence on keeping the left bank of the Peiho at Tientsin, and the railway siding, on the plea that Russian blood had been spilt there and so the place

must remain Russian for ever. Ultimately the dispute was arbitrated and the verdict given against them, but the stand they made was very significant.

Their withdrawal from the Concert was also a plain sign of the times. After the relief of Peking the allied Powers called on the Chinese Government to punish certain officials for complicity in atrocious murders. It was intimated that the allied forces would continue to hold Peking, and would even send an expedition in chase of the fugitive Court, unless satisfaction was given in this matter. Suddenly the Russian troops left Peking. Count Waldersee was coming with 16,000 German troops, and the Concert of Powers had agreed that he should direct all the allied forces. In farewell speeches to his troops the Kaiser had spoken strongly of punishing China. But a few days before the Germans reached Peking the Russians went back to Port Arthur, saying, first, they did not care a jot about the murders of missionaries and women and children, all non-Russian ; secondly, they did not care to serve under the German ; and, finally, they had pressing business in Manchuria.

It was stated that Li Hung-chang was arranging to cede Manchuria outright to Russia, in return for her withdrawal from the Concert ; but the plan fell through on account of Li's death. The veteran statesman of China had in several previous instances played into the hands of Russia, to the grave detriment of China, but in each case he had some reason to fear that a worse evil might befall his country ; and none of the other Powers seemed disposed to help. If he happened to make money out of his dealings with Russia, that is a mere detail, for it is the custom in the East

to give 'the usual presents' in connection with important transactions.

The death of Li Hung-chang brought into prominence Chang Chih-tung and Liu Kun-yih, the two great Viceroys of the Yangtse provinces; and they had been wonderfully impressed by the Yangtse Compact, whereby the river provinces had been guaranteed against foreign aggression on condition of good behaviour. They saw no need, therefore, to sacrifice a province to buy a foreign Power off, and they headed the opposition to the Russian proposals. They might have failed, or not dared, as long as Li Hung-chang was there to support Russia, but now they felt free to act, and confident of foreign support. Soon, under official approval, there were mass meetings of Chinese in the central and southern provinces, passing strong resolutions, and telegraphing to Peking—a thing never known in all the previous history of China. This was early in 1901: the Boxers were practically all suppressed, the Court was beginning to move back towards Peking, the allied troops were withdrawing by degrees from Chihli province, and the only black cloud on the horizon was bad news from Manchuria. Stories of Russian misdeeds in that region crept out into the world slowly, but lost nothing in the repetition from village to village across thousands of miles of terror-stricken country. The centre and south of China heard in due course; and indignation at the massacres of Chinese served to intensify the feeling against any cession of territory. They had heard about the Concert of Powers agreeing to maintain China's integrity, and with a Chinaman, at least as much as with anyone in the world, a contract is a con-

tract—a thing inviolable. It is common to hear of Chinese officials evading terms of treaties, but usually there are simply different points of view, and, at any rate, it is the rarest thing to hear of flat repudiation by Chinese.

Had it been understood at first that the penalty for the outrages must be the loss of some territory, they would probably have made comparatively little demur, for they generally condemned Boxerism, and would expect punishment to fall somewhere. The history of China—every province of it—abounds in dreadful memories of slaughter and devastation, the invariable result of risings; and the people recognise that all armed bodies of Chinese—whether Boxers, Kolao-hui, Triad, Taiping, Mohammedan rebels, or the regular troops of the Imperial army—are all alike, all murdering villains together. That is why any rising, after a certain stage, is sure to draw recruits wholesale, since all who are not of the slayers are likely to be slain. Yet they hate fighting, and prefer peace at any price. So they would not have resented the loss of Manchuria so much, if it had been stated as part of the bargain when peace was being made; they would have been glad to be rid of two terrors—Boxerism and foreign invasion—at such a price. But to find, after all, that the foreign aggression was not at an end as promised, while separate penalties were inflicted for the disturbances—this was a new alarm. If it must be a choice between two evils, they would sooner be all Boxer than all swallowed up. If their Manchu Dynasty could do nothing—well, dynasties come and go, each in its turn rots and dies; the traditional life of a dynasty in China is 250 years, and this one was

about that age. The Southern Chinese have always regarded the Manchus as mere 'northern barbarians.' Any person who neglects his ancestral tombs or allows them to be dishonoured is anathema, accursed of the accursed, throughout all China; nobody can retain the slightest respect for him.

These things were not said in these words, but they were conveyed to Peking in language quite as pointed for Chinese understanding. Chang Chih-tung left his Yangtse principality to take up quarters in Peking, out of office, to be near the Throne, and to save the Empire and dynasty if stern and incessant warnings could avail.

He knows well how the provinces are honeycombed with secret societies, charitable in outward appearance, but revolutionary at root, and only waiting patiently. He knows how the people look back regretfully to the days of the Ming Dynasty as to a golden age, and he knows that the Mings, though said to have been all hunted down and killed when the Manchus seized the throne, did not perish, but in many cases paid people to report them killed and so end pursuit. There are thousands of Mings alive now, undoubted scions of the former Imperial house, living as quietly as descendants of former rulers in Britain — Stuarts, O'Briens, Llewellyns, Caradocks. They live as ordinary citizens, but in China one never knows—the placid old shopkeeper, under the sign of the 'Thousand Happy Emblems,' may in his unobserved evenings be head-centre of some White Lily or Righteous Army organization, numbering thousands of enrolled cut-throats, awaiting the word to break loose. It may not happen in our time; it may never happen. But it

is possible at any time, and that is why the Chinese Government made such strenuous efforts to seize and execute the publishers of the *Supao*, in Shanghai, in 1902-1903, for denouncing the dynasty on account of its helplessness in regard to Manchuria.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARING TO STRIKE

From the beginning of the Boxer trouble the Japanese Government had well understood why certain Powers had not wished Japan to hasten to the relief of Tientsin and Peking, but had preferred to risk an awful and colossal crime. It was Russia that had objected, and had very urgently insisted on the relief being delayed until her troops could take part in it in full strength. It was evident from that moment that Russia had made up her mind to utilize the disturbance for the sake of gaining possession of all Manchuria; and as soon as peace was restored Japan began to take a very keen interest in the withdrawal of troops from all Chinese territory. This was accomplished almost entirely in the early part of 1901, but the Japanese had an excellent secret service throughout Manchuria, noting carefully how the Russians were not withdrawing at all, but were making arrangements in every station as if for a systematic and permanent occupation. There was enough information in this direction to prove that all the official assurances given by Russia were mere waste of words.

Accordingly, Japan set to work at once on the task of getting Russia out of Manchuria.

The first step was taken in the autumn of 1901.

Marquis Ito went to St. Petersburg, and tried what could be done there in the way of an amicable arrangement. His visit only convinced him that Russia was determined to keep Manchuria, even if it meant war. Immediately on this the Anglo-Japanese alliance was announced in the last week of the year. It amounted to a plain intimation that Great Britain agreed with Japan in insisting on the integrity of the whole Chinese Empire, and would not allow Japan again to be confronted by three Powers as in 1895. Russia thereupon (in January, 1902) agreed to withdraw her troops from Manchuria in three stages, the part nearest Peking to be clear by October following, the part nearest Korea by April, 1903, and the northernmost section by October, 1903.

But the Japanese understand that one must not take much notice of what Russia says. I have often heard it said in Japan, 'Europeans of the highest class consider it perfectly permissible to say one thing and do another.' And so the Japanese secret service in Manchuria was relied on very much more than diplomatic assurances. It was found that, while Russian troops were transferred from the south-west section of Manchuria by the date appointed, they were not taken out of Manchuria, and in the north there were more troops coming in all the time. This went on through the first six months of 1903, and then the Japanese declined to accept the pretence any longer. They knew China could do nothing, and the very danger they had been anxious to guard against for all these years was coming on them now. Russia was playing with them, and preparing to fight with them. As the Manchurian Railway, not yet finished at the

time of the Boxer outbreak, was now nearly finished, it would be so much the worse for Japan to wait.

Russia's actions amounted to a declaration of war, in deeds which speak louder than words. The railway connection right through from St. Petersburg to Port Arthur was completed in August, and the first use Russia made of it was to pour troops into Manchuria up to the extreme carrying capacity of the line. Officially, this was called an experiment, but no troops went back, and the Japanese Government decided to relieve China of a task beyond her powers, and press for the opening of direct negotiations between Tokyo and St. Petersburg regarding Manchuria. To leave the question to drag on at Peking would only be to let Russia prepare at leisure to defy everyone. Had Russia declined to discuss the question with Japan, China would have had to take action and call on all the treaty Powers to support her, and Russia could not afford to allow this.

Throughout the negotiations the Japanese kept a very close watch on every act of the Russians in the Far East, and promptly placed a warning finger on each point of divergence between Russian profession and practice with a dogged persistence and a patient courtesy that ought to have shown the Russians how much self-restraint Japan was exercising, and what a dangerous Power it was that was being restrained.

To sum up the negotiations, Japan asked that Russia should formally acknowledge China's sovereignty over Manchuria, and Russia evaded the point so markedly as to amount to a refusal. Japan was willing that the railway should remain Russian, and that troops should be stationed along the line to protect it,

but the administration of the country must be purely in Chinese hands, and, apart from the railway, Russia should occupy the same position in Manchuria as any other Power. This was strictly in accord with all the previous promises of Russia, but it was absolutely falsified by the facts; Russian troops were stationed all over the country instead of only guarding the railway, and Chinese authority was completely set aside. Foreigners were prohibited from going into the interior except with Russian passports; the treaty port of Newchwang was an out-and-out Russian port, under a Russian Governor, with a Russian garrison and a Russian Commissioner of Customs; Russian taxes were being levied on the natives, and Russian rules and regulations enforced on them everywhere. A Russian censorship was even established over commercial code telegrams at Newchwang in October, 1903, and all the while troops kept coming into Manchuria, despite the fact that the time for final evacuation had arrived.

The completion of the railway had also revived a Russian scheme in Northern Korea. There had been a concession granted to a Russian for the purpose of cutting timber in the Yalu Valley, where there are immense tracts of valuable forest belonging to the Korean Imperial Household. The timber trade in these regions has been carried on from time immemorial by Koreans and Chinese, and to a small extent by Japanese, in primitive style and on a comparatively small scale. The river brings down ordinarily log rafts at the rate of about 1,000 logs a month in summer, the water being frozen four months in the year. Just after the China-Japan War of 1894-1895 a Russian obtained

a concession which he claimed gave him a monopoly of all timber in the Yalu region, but he never used it as long as the Manchurian Railway remained incomplete. Early in 1903 he obtained a renewal of the concession, and simultaneously with the first 'experimental' arrival of troops by the transcontinental railway there was a marked influx of Russians into the Yalu region.

The Japanese kept themselves very well informed about these new arrivals, and found that the manager in charge of the whole enterprise was a retired colonel and his men all ex-soldiers, but they had their rifles and ammunition with them. This, of course, was to guard against robbers. Next the Japanese learnt that the Russians had obtained a piece of land to build a settlement at Yongampo, a village on the Korean shore of the Yalu, near the sea, and having a pretty good anchorage for steamers. The next news was that nobody except Russians or their native employés could go to Yongampo. Next there was a report that a fort was being built there. This must be looked into at once. It was just at the time (the first week of October) when the final stage of Russia's withdrawal from Manchuria was to mature, if Russia meant what she said. About the same time it was learnt that a large Russian force, between 10,000 and 20,000, was marching across Liaotung towards the Korean frontier, and exceptionally large contracts for flour, biscuits, corned beef, etc., were being placed by Russian agents for delivery at Port Arthur in the shortest possible time. These contracts caused great excitement in Japan, for besides ordering provisions to the amount of several million dollars in America, there were also orders placed in Japan, and at one time every flour-dealer and baker in

Yokohama and Tokyo was given a 'rush order' for the maximum he could supply within ten days for Port Arthur. At the same time more Russian warships were coming out, and private information reached Tokyo regularly regarding numbers of troops coming by rail into Manchuria.

It was therefore a serious question for Japan whether to strike at once or wait yet longer. Had the Russians left Korea alone, Japan might perhaps afford to wait and hope for the best; but this fort and garrison at Yongampo must be investigated. Mr. Hagiwara, Secretary of Legation at Seoul, was sent to visit the place officially and openly and report, and his visit proved very inconvenient for the Russians. He arrived off Yongampo in the steamship *Wakanoura* on October 21, but was not allowed to land, and the vessel was ordered to go away at once. Under the treaties, Japanese have equal rights with other foreigners to visit any part of the country. Mr. Hagiwara went to Wiju and Antung, a few miles further up the river, and telegraphed for instructions. There was some sharp telegraphing between Seoul, Tokyo, and St. Petersburg for a few days, and Mr. Hagiwara again went to Yongampo on the 27th.

By this time the Russian works there had a comparatively innocent appearance. If it had been true, as reported confidentially a few weeks before, that cannon had been taken to Yongampo, they had by this time been removed or concealed. There remained, however, what certainly looked like a partly-completed fort. There is a conical hillock in a very commanding situation, and the top of this had been levelled, with a bank of earth about 6 feet high all round it, and three

gaps cut in this rampart. It looked like nothing else but a fort for three guns, but the director of the works, M. Stromidoff, assured Mr. Hagiwara that it was only intended to build a hut. Another thing puzzled Mr. Hagiwara very much—a brick pillar, 2 feet square and about 4 feet 6 inches high. M. Stromidoff explained that it was only meant for a man to lean against, and he rested his elbow on it to show how. The Japanese visitor calmly replied, 'Oh, yes, I see ; thank you,' and spent a sleepless night trying to guess what it really was. The bland remark of the Russian seemed to prove that there was something wrong about it, and Mr. Hagiwara concluded it might be intended to support a wireless-telegraph mast. Then, after four days spent in looking round thoroughly, he departed with an ample apology from the Russians for having delayed him at first.

By a strange coincidence, the railway-carriage in which the Japanese Secretary of Legation left Seoul on this mission took away an officer of the Russian Legation for a very different reason, and one which forcibly illustrates the difference between the two national types. Colonel von Raben was the Russian attaché. He was sent away because he had just fought a duel with the Minister, M. Pavloff. There was no secret about the affair ; all the details were the talk of Seoul. M. Pavloff ought at that critical time to have had no thought for anything in the world except the diplomatic problems which were at such an acute stage. Two nations were trembling on the verge of a war which in all human probability might lead to a general conflagration of the whole world, and M. Pavloff was a central figure of the situation. Yet about that time

he was chiefly concerning himself with the friendly relations of Madame Pavloff and Colonel von Raben, and at last insisted on fighting the man, at the very moment when Japan was considering whether Yongampo would prove a *casus belli*. M. Pavloff received a slight wound; honour was presumably satisfied; M. Pavloff placed himself under the doctor and nursed his scratch, and deprived himself of a presumably useful assistant in the midst of a crisis; and the same train which carried Colonel von Raben away for such unbusinesslike reasons conveyed Mr. Hagiwara, a very ideal type of earnestness, intent every moment on duty and nothing else, and going now on an errand which the Russians would have done well to take into more serious account.

I mention this little incident because it illustrates so forcibly what has often been noted in the Russians, that while they are good-hearted and high-spirited in the main, they are a great deal too fond of indulging in various frivolities instead of attending to business; and further, they are apt to let private affairs come before their duty. In this there is the strongest possible contrast between the Japanese and the Russian, and it explains a good deal. In fact, the Japanese can teach all Western nations a great lesson in earnestness, and another lesson in duty. Our maxim that 'All work and no play will make Jack a dull boy' seems to be totally disproved, for with the Japanese diversions occupy scarcely a hundredth part of the attention we give them. They cannot understand how we devote so much time to amusements. They live more nearly on the plan of the Spartan than any Western nation. The noblest and richest in Japan

cultivate an elegant simplicity and an intellectual intensity worthy of the school of Socrates. Not all of them, of course; possibly not even a majority—but certainly a far larger proportion than in Europe. And taking the nation as a whole, I think the ideals, the ambitions, the philosophy, the domestic life, and the weaknesses, defects, and downright vices of the ancient Greeks at their best are more nearly reproduced in the Japanese than in any other people.

As a specimen taken at random, Mr. Hagiwara is a fair average type. Of good family and well-to-do, he was allowed in boyhood no luxuries whatever. He was sent to Tokyo University, but had to walk five or six miles to it every day, and back. College life in Japan comprises, usually, as much amusement as prison life in England. Boys do not spend nine-tenths of their time in sports, and study casually for a change; they spend all their time in study, and recreation is cut down to the minimum. On leaving the University, with a degree in English Law, Mr. Hagiwara entered the Home Department in 1895, and was afterwards sent to Chemulpo as Acting Consul. In 1896 Korea was full of disturbance: the pro-Japanese section of Korean politicians had wrecked their cause by being implicated in the murder of the Queen, and from time to time there were anti-Japanese riots and murders at many places in Mr. Hagiwara's district. He worked hard, day and night, investigating every case as it occurred, rescuing Japanese from outlying places, pressing for arrests of murderers, putting in claims for damages, and so on. It was a time of terrible trouble, and a stern training for so young a man.

In 1897 he went to Berlin under Viscount Aoki, and

MME. PAVLOFF IS THE TALL LADY CARRYING A STICK.

GARDEN-PARTY AT THE GERMAN LEGATION, SEOUL.

afterwards to Brussels as Secretary of Legation. He attended the Hague Peace Conference with Viscount Hayashi, and at other times visited St. Petersburg, London, and Italy. He has earned already two decorations from his Government. He is a man of no amusements at all; in his spare time he reads history, political economy, and the like, or takes exercise on horseback. But as for spending evenings in playing cards, going to theatres or parties, reading novels, and all that sort of thing, 'there is so much to do with other things.'

That is one of the secrets of Japan's success.

In October I interviewed many of the principal officials in Tokyo, and tried to find out what was going to be the result of Russia's refusal to leave Manchuria as promised. General Kodama, a man well known as having a special genius for organization, had just given up the snug berth of Governor-General of Formosa to become Chief of Staff in the Army. Unofficial observers, the best informed, said this meant getting ready for war. The officials, of course, had to say it did not. There was a trial trip of warships and merchant steamers from Japan to Korea as a part of the annual naval manœuvres, arranged in every way to resemble the conditions of actual transport of troops in war-time, but that again had 'no political significance.'

The Premier, Count Katsura, gave me over an hour of his time, because, he said, at such a time as this it was most important that public opinion in England should be accurately informed as to the views of Japan. The negotiations then pending could not, of course, be discussed, but the general feeling of the

Japanese nation could. Great Britain, as Japan's ally, had a right to ask for all information legitimately obtainable, otherwise the alliance might be viewed with suspicion. In effect, the Premier told me substantially the same thing that the Russo-Japanese diplomatic correspondence afterwards told all the world authoritatively—that Japan did not ask for the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from Manchuria, but was willing to agree that some should remain to protect the railway, if it could be distinctly stated that the territorial sovereignty of China in Manchuria remained unimpaired, and that all nations should have equal rights and opportunities there, as provided by the treaties. As to this, he thought Russia was bound to agree, in view of her previous promises. And as to Korea, Japan could not permit the slightest encroachment on her special position, and he believed Russia fully understood that, and would not in the end prove unreasonable. Japan felt the importance of the alliance with Great Britain, and would not pursue any policy of adventure likely to forfeit the goodwill of her best friend. This meant, of course, though he would not go so far as to say it outright, that the two Governments were keeping closely in concert, and each step was discussed carefully between them, so that there could be no risk of Great Britain's being drawn into any dispute contrary to her own policy. As a result, Japan's requests were framed on such a moderate basis that he felt sure Russia could not decline to agree.

Yet Russia did decline, and at that date almost all the best-informed Japanese thought she would, though no official could say so. I saw the Minister for War, General Terauchi, who knew me of old, and assured me

that there was no truth whatever in the idea sometimes suggested by foreigners that there was a military party urging the country to war. He said the army took no part in politics, had no opinions outside of strict duty and discipline, but was ready to do its duty at any moment. 'Perhaps even a little more ready than usual'—naturally, in such a time. And when I suggested that many people considered war was inevitable, he smiled quietly, and said, 'Souvent les choses inévitables sont évitées'—'These unavoidable things often are avoided.'

Mr. Tsudzuki, Secretary to the Privy Council, also told me that it was not considered essential that all the Russian troops should be withdrawn from Manchuria. It was merely desired that the sovereign rights of China, and with them the treaty rights of Japanese and all foreigners, should be maintained, and with that proviso there need be no difficulty about Russian troops staying to guard the railway. He felt sure Russia could not refuse this. He did not say this as an official utterance, but as his own impression of the Japanese view.

But only officials took this optimist tone. Others who were not in duty bound to preach peace said Russia would not be reasonable, and there would have to be war. They said Russia would profess everything good and do everything bad; would repeat her verbal adhesion to the 'open door' principle, while hard at work shutting it in the most effective way. And they said that, however forbearing Japan might be, and however patient the people could be while the Government allowed itself to be put off and put off, in the end neither the Government nor the country would take 'peace at any

price' as a motto, and Russia was making a fatal error in thinking such a thing.

Sir Claude MacDonald told me the situation seemed to him, after the most careful thought, to be like nothing in the world so much as a powder-magazine where sparks were flying about the doorway, and there might be a tremendous explosion any minute; it could only be averted by a miracle. But this was a statement that could not be published; it would only make more excitement. I suppose there is no harm in referring to it now. It was not merely his opinion, but was shared by some of his colleagues. The Japanese Cabinet was undoubtedly doing its utmost to preserve peace, but it had to recognise the facts and prepare for contingencies. The appointment of Baron Kodama was a war-sign. The Russian works at Yongampo were really and emphatically of a military nature, and that was the worst war-sign; it would be extraordinarily surprising if Russian encroachments in Korea did not precipitate war. Whatever might be said of the sovereign independence and territorial integrity of Korea, strategically it must be considered as if it was practically a part of Japan. There are several precedents for a country's being independent and yet forming an integral part of the defence of another country.

At the Russian Legation I was told curtly, 'We have nothing to say to newspapers at all.' I mention this because the British Press has been accused of not doing justice to the Russian side. So far as my experience goes, the Press has been only too willing, and if public opinion among the Anglo-Saxon peoples is not favourable to Russia, it is because Russia has

refused to give opportunity for the statement of her case.

The Japanese proposals were sent to St. Petersburg in October, and no reply came until December 11. Meanwhile, the transcontinental railway was getting into better working order, ships were still coming out, and at Port Arthur and Vladivostok the Russians were confidently talking of a war to make these impudent Japanese keep quiet. Private information from Port Arthur was especially emphatic. Viceroy Alexieff was said to have received definite war orders, and was simply waiting to choose his moment. Japan could not afford to let him do that; but it suited her also to wait yet a few days. She had the newly purchased warships *Nishin* and *Kasuga* coming out from Italy, and Russia had the transports *Kazan* and *Voronej* and several warships on the way out, besides the whole length of the railway now crowded with troop-trains crawling slowly along the roughly finished line. Yet the Russians never dreamed that Japan would anticipate their attack. On December 11 came Russia's reply, roughly sweeping aside the whole question of Manchuria, and offering only to discuss some limitations of Japan's position in Korea. This was a cynical confession that all the negotiations about Manchuria since the beginning of August had not been seriously meant on Russia's side. It meant that she was determined to set aside China's sovereignty, and to interfere in Korea, and to deal with Japan in due time.

One of the Japanese Ministers put the position in a nutshell: 'We do not want war, for it would cost us so much, and we have nothing to gain even if we win;

but by keeping peace too long we may lose even our national existence.'

So, as a last appeal, Japan on December 21 asked Russia to reconsider her decision: on January 6 Russia replied, again proposing to deal with Korea, but refusing to guarantee China's sovereignty in Manchuria; on the 13th Japan's request for a reconsideration was repeated, and on February 4 Russia sent to Viceroy Alexieff, for transmission to Japan, what amounted to a flat challenge to war. It was sent to Alexieff first, so that he should be ready to strike immediately, or if still not quite ready he should delay the reply a little; and it was to the effect that Russia must refuse to recognise Japan's right to say a word about Manchuria at all, and must insist on some modification of Japan's position in Korea, and that, unless Japan would signify her assent within a given time, Russia would use force. The time limit of the ultimatum was for Alexieff to decide.

This answer never reached the Japanese Government officially. Some idea of its purport was given to the Japanese Minister in St. Petersburg by Count Lamsdorff, but more information was obtained privately from Port Arthur, where the necessary orders given to the warships could not be quite kept secret, and Alexieff's intended ultimatum was known in Tokyo almost as soon as in Port Arthur. But the Japanese are quicker than the Russians, and on February 5 a telegram was sent to St. Petersburg (arriving on the 6th) to sever friendly relations. On the 6th, also, the Russian Minister in Tokyo was handed his passports, and simultaneously the order was given to set the navy and army of Japan in motion. It was made

known in whispers that the Russian fleet was under order to leave Port Arthur soon to attack the Japanese, and that everything depended on catching them before they could start.

It was known also that Russian troops had crossed the Yalu on February 2 to the number of about 2,000, and there were said to be 20,000 more ready to cross and invade Korea. That crossing was the actual commencement of war, and must have been known to the Russian Government and the Commander at Port Arthur and the Minister at Seoul. What they did not know, and what surprised them so completely, was the quickness of Japan in getting the information and acting on it.

When General Terauchi said, 'We are ready at any moment,' he meant absolutely any moment. In the morning of that February 6 all Japan was peace, and all the people attending to their regular occupations. In the evening of February 6 the navy of Japan was out on the open sea, racing to catch the enemy before he could come to deliver his attack. The soldiers of Japan were all on the move, some already crossing the water to Korea, others coming down by train to the point of embarcation. The ships had been in readiness for days, some for weeks, to take troops on board. The railway companies throughout the land had been notified, and in the flash of a single simultaneous telegram the ordinary running of trains was changed wherever necessary, and steady streams of armed men began to gravitate towards Sasebo, Nagasaki, Moji, Ujina, as if they had been so many streams of lava pouring simultaneously down the furrowed hillside of some mighty volcano which had slumbered

for centuries and then suddenly begun to pour out fire and molten metal.

In the morning of February 6 people said, as they had said for months, 'This suspense is growing unbearable; this anxiety is almost worse than if war should actually come. Yet we must have patience, patience, patience, and none can tell how it will end, or when.'

In the evening the die was cast, the waiting ended, and the tension relaxed. And Japan was glad—not glad to be at war, but glad to end the terrible strain, glad to know the worst at last.

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

GENERAL KUROPATKIN AND HIS STAFF ON THE MARCH.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IS IN THE LEADING CARRIAGE.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST BLOW

LIKE a great, complex, perfect machine, every section set in motion simultaneously by the simple act of pressing a button, the entire fighting force of Japan began to move at the moment the word was given. Soldiers who had been for days or weeks waiting for the 'cue,' quietly and methodically filed out of barracks and into boats to board the waiting troopships at Sasebo; provisions and ammunition, field equipment, and all other necessaries had been stowed on board in advance, and the flotilla of troopships for the invasion of Korea moved out of Sasebo before daylight on February 6, the main body of the fleet accompanying. All the warships had had their places and duties assigned to them long before, and the movement was like clockwork, or, rather, like a mighty fire-brigade turning out in a few seconds at the call of 'Fire!' The first thing was to strike with full force at the very heart of the enemy. The main squadron of the Russians at Port Arthur must be pinned down there before anything else could be thought of and the main squadron of the Japanese steamed its swiftest, west and north, in the teeth of an icy wind, every man, from Admiral to coal-trimmer, in a fever of anxiety lest the enemy should get out and away to do mischief before he could be brought to bay.

The backbone of Japan's naval power was the battleship squadron of six vessels, all of the most modern and powerful type, and nearly alike, therefore working well together. The *Hatsuse*, *Asahi*, and *Shikishima*, sister ships, 15,000 tons, 18 knots, each with guns to fire 4,240 pounds' weight of projectile at one broadside; *Fuji* and *Yashima*, sister ships, 12,300 tons, same speed, and 4,000 pounds broadside; and the flagship *Mikasa*, 15,200 tons, same speed, 4,200 pounds broadside. These were the first division of Admiral Togo's fleet, and under him they were in charge of Rear-Admiral Nashiba. The second division consisted of armoured cruisers, almost as homogeneous as the battleships: the *Iwate* and *Izumo*, sister ships, 9,800 tons, 24 knots, each 3,500 pounds broadside; *Azuma* and *Yakumo*, almost exactly the same; and *Tokiwa*, nearly the same again. The third comprised the *Kasagi* and *Chitose*, sister ships, 4,700 tons, 22 knots, 800 pounds broadside; *Takasago*, nearly the same, but a trifle faster; and *Yoshino*, nearly the same again—these four being unarmoured, of the 'greyhound' type. Total—fifteen ships bound for Port Arthur. There was another division bound for Chemulpo with the troopships, a third ordered to patrol the channel between Japan and Korea, and other vessels were stationed singly, or in twos and threes, on the look-out at the chief points of vantage in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean waters; for there were Russian warships at various places away from Port Arthur, and they must all be watched as far as possible. But the great thing was to strike swiftly at the main Russian fleet.

Besides the battleships and cruisers, Admiral Togo

had with him fifteen 30-knot torpedo-destroyers, and about twenty first and second class torpedo-boats, some of them very small, and not usually expected to attempt anything beyond the defence of home harbours. But they crossed the sea without mishap, and did wonderful work afterwards. Admiral Togo had with him about half of the total torpedo force, the other thirty or forty small craft being distributed in the same way as the big ships.

With the fast cruisers *Iwate* and *Izumo* keeping a good look-out ahead, port and starboard, the battleships and cruisers kept well together and the torpedo craft on each side of the column, and so they skirted the Korean coast all day (Saturday, February 6) and all night, threading their way among the outer fringe of the myriad islands, because the inner channels would be unsafe for such a large number of big ships in company. During Sunday forenoon the vessels all anchored under shelter of Anmingdo or Lindsay Island, about five hours' steam to the south of Chemulpo. Here, in accordance with the carefully-laid plan, the gunboat *Akashi* was met; she had been on the Korean station before war broke out, and brought news. The Russian squadron had been reported leaving Port Arthur a few days before, on a trial run as far as Dalny and back; the question now was whether the trial had been followed up by any serious movement, as it would make all the difference in the world. The Russians had been rather expected to make a bid immediately for the command of Korea, by landing in force at Chemulpo and rushing up to Seoul. This was what Korean officials had been saying on the authority of the Russian Minister,

M. Pavloff. It would, of course, have had the result of promptly driving the whole Korean nation like a flock of scared sheep to the side of Russia, and Japan's task would have been enormously increased. That was why it was worth while to hurry troops over from Japan to Seoul at once, without waiting for the mastery of the sea to be decided. If the naval power should after all rest with Russia, of course the Japanese troops in Korea would most likely be lost; but that had to be risked, for the sake of having the first say with the Koreans. So it was good news that the *Akashi* brought when she reported that the Russian fleet was still in Port Arthur, and only the *Varyag* and *Koreyetz* in Chemulpo, exactly as had been the case before Admiral Togo left Sasebo.

The programme, therefore, needed no alteration : the troopships, escorted by the armoured cruiser *Asama* (9,750 tons), the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho* (unarmoured, 3,700 tons), and the *Suma* and *Akashi* (each 2,000 tons), left the main body and proceeded to Chemulpo, while the others all went on their way north with increased confidence, though without neglecting any precaution. The torpedo-destroyers acted as scouts in advance of the big ships, and the moment they sighted a strange vessel they passed the word to the flagship. At different points on the voyage three Russian steamers were seen, and in each case there was a short, sharp pursuit, a shot fired as warning, and the Russians stopped and surrendered. The first one happened to be called the *Rossia*, and the name was regarded as a happy omen : '*Russia* surrendered, *Russia* in our hands!' Not that there are many Japanese who attach serious importance to chance

omens, but there is real ground for encouragement in scoring first, and one could hardly help being the more pleased with the coincidence of the name. The vessel was not the big cruiser *Rossia*, however, but a small merchant steamer plying between Port Arthur and Vladivostok. A much more valuable capture was made a little later; the large mail-steamer *Manchuria*, belonging to the Chinese Eastern Railway Company (a Russian Government concern), was found nearing Port Arthur, and proved to have some 800 tons of munitions of war on board, besides a large amount of other goods which would be very useful in the war.

It was Sunday evening when the Japanese squadron divided, the smaller part (five cruisers, three transports, and two destroyers) going to Chemulpo, and the remainder, about fifty vessels in all, going towards Port Arthur, an easy twenty-four hours' steam away. Next day the gunboat *Tatsuta* turned up about forty miles from that port, and gave the latest information—that the Russian squadron was all in readiness to sail, but was not likely to sail for another day or two; the *Tatsuta* had managed to get word from the shore by junks, from 'secret informants,' that there was to be a good deal of jollification in the town that very night by way of farewell to the fleet before it went out to destroy the Japanese. Still, the Russians were of course keeping a look-out, and some of the smaller craft were constantly on the move just outside the port; so the *Tatsuta* herself had had to keep well out of sight while waiting for fishing-boats to find her.

About sunset on Monday, February 8, Admiral Togo brought his big fleet to anchor under the shelter

of Lichangshan or Elliott Island, the largest of a group of the same name, about sixty-five miles to the eastward of Port Arthur. No Russian scouts were about; they seemed to neglect entirely the whole sea beyond a ten-mile radius of their base.

To most of the Japanese, including the Admiral and nearly everyone of his captains and rear-admirals, this was simply re-enacting an old and familiar drama. The same scene, so well known; the same old islands; the rugged rocks of Hayuentao, where the Chinese warships came to grief ten years ago after the battle of the Yalu—these are quite near Elliott Island, and on the other side of it is the mainland of Liaotung, not visible, because it lies low—as low as the crumbling mud-cliffs of Holderness, from Bridlington to sunken Spurn; but visible or not, these Japanese know it in the dark—know all the soundings of the shelving mud bottom and all the awkward landing-places over miles of slimy mud-flats; and they know to a cable's-length how near one may anchor a battleship drawing 27 feet or a tug-boat drawing six. It is child's play to them now, for they learnt it all thoroughly before, and have talked it over, and fought their old battles over again, thousands of times since 1894. And now it is the same game they are to play again, but against a very different foe—a mighty European Power supposed to be irresistible. Well, it may be so. 'If we come to grief, *shikataganai*, it cannot be helped, and we must just face our fate like men. . . . But one never knows, and these terrible Russians have done nothing yet; here we are, our knife at their throats, and they all unaware. They mean to come out and destroy us to-morrow; to-night they are having a farewell jollification and laughing

over what they will do to us. Perhaps we may do some of the destroying first.' And thus saying, the Japanese torpedo crews took their lives in their hands, and leaped into the darkness of night.

The moon was in its last quarter, and would not show before daylight. The sea was fairly calm, but there was a sharp northerly wind, and a temperature of about ten degrees below freezing-point. How the wind bites into one's eyes when straining to see through the black gloom ahead as the boats slip through the water! Not at top speed, for that was reserved until the supreme moment, but at twenty knots, the speed of a first-class ocean liner. Every few minutes some wave would fly into spray over the bow and drive along the deck, freezing as it drove; the sailor at the steering-wheel would feel his fingers growing numb, and hope they would not play him a trick at a critical moment; the lieutenant in command and his 'sub,' perched up on the little bridge, holding on to the rail as the slender craft leaps and curvets over the seas, peer through their night-glasses till their eyes ache, and then break silence only to say, 'There is nothing.' The torpedo-gunner, for the hundredth time, looks his wonderful weapon over and over again, wipes a speck of grease off a shining metal surface, and softly croons to his pet machine a scrap of an old Samurai song, 'My sword, you never tasted blood; wait yet a while, only a little longer.' And the engineer and his assistant, crouched in a little cubby-hole amid the whir and throb of the twin engines, creep in and out all the time, watching each part of the mechanism to detect promptly any heating of a bearing, any loosening of joint or nut, and they watch

the hair's-breadth variations of the gauge-glass, the faintest movement of the fingers on the dial recording the steam pressure, and note how the stokers, turn and turn about, keep up the incessant supply of coal, without stopping to think how a single little shot could play havoc with all this machinery, as delicate in some parts as the works of a watch.

So the minutes and the miles pass by, and the destroyers in four hours have made a big détour, circling past Port Arthur at a distance of twelve miles, then returning to dash straight in. The inky blackness of the night has slightly softened to eyes now grown used to it, and between the dark mass of sea and the dark expanse of sky there is a thin line yet darker—the land. Faintly one can make out its ups and downs, and just over one of the hollows in the land there is the faintest glimmer in the sky, the reflection of lights from the houses in Port Arthur. At last!

The Russian ships cannot yet be made out, but their position is so nearly known that they will soon be found, and the more impenetrable the darkness the better. There may be one or two Russian vessels cruising in the open on patrol; they must be eluded, and the rest of the ships will be found at anchor in the outer roadstead, within a mile of the narrow channel that leads to the inner harbour. So here is gathered the might and majesty of the terrible Russian Empire that destroys all Asiatics! Here are magnificent ships just on the eve of sailing out to destroy the Japanese. Here are gallant officers and brave men, many thousands, drinking a parting glass, making merry over their last night of life in port. To-morrow they will go forth to war, will they? The cod

would swallow the herring, but the osprey swallowed first.

If anything more had been needed to nerve the Japanese for the supreme effort, those rugged black hills behind Port Arthur told a tale of dead brothers, fathers, and honoured chiefs of fighting clans—brave men whose stirring deeds had been told in every home in Japan—men who had died on these Port Arthur hillsides, had paid the price with their blood, and bought the fortress fairly for their loved country. And when they had bought it these Russians came and stole it—robbed the dead heroes of the prize for which they died. And these Russians would come out to fight to-morrow. To-night they feasted, and now was the time to strike.

The Commander of the foremost destroyer passed the word—it was no time now for even such a slight sound as the ring of a bell in the engine-room—and a sailor stepped down with the order to put on full speed. Then the sailor crept away aft, where a single screened light showed to the following boat; covering the light with his cap, then uncovering again, he gave a series of flashes with dark intervals, and the look-out man on the next boat knew that the order was 'full speed ahead,' as pre-arranged. The signal could not be answered, for the boats were a quarter of a mile apart, and it would not do to show a light that might be visible to the enemy. Immediately afterwards, even the screened light astern was put out, as the destroyers headed in single file to dash across the front of the harbour and away to sea again.

The Russian ships gradually loomed up in the dark-

ness, a line of big black masses, silent, motionless. Yet they had men on the look-out, and as the swift destroyers drew near there was an alarm, and soon a warning shot rang out on the night air. It was all hurry and noise in a few seconds. From ship to ship the alarm spread: sailors ran along decks to call officers from their cabins; men sprang to the electric searchlights and turned them on, to sweep the surface of the deep; bugles rang out to call crews to quarters; sailors, startled out of their sleep, tumbled out on deck, grumbling at the bitter cold and wondering what the alarm really meant; gun crews lined up alongside their guns, and ammunition hoists began sending up their loads from the magazines, in response to dozens of voices shouting impatiently for the ten-inch, the one-pounder, the six-inch, the belts and hoppers of machine guns, the eight and four and three inch—every kind of ammunition, all wanted to be ready at once, for nobody could tell precisely what form of attack was upon them. Some officers and men were ashore, and others had to do double duty, for a call to action needs every place to be filled. In the absence of a captain, a lieutenant had to give orders in one breath to a dozen subordinates—which of the guns should fire, and where; what signals to make to other ships or the shore; what to do in the engine-room and stokehold, in the magazine and torpedo-room; what about water-tight doors or collision mats, about getting up anchor or putting out torpedo-nets, and what about a score of other things, all at once. For when a ship is to go into action, each man of the hundreds on board has his own orders, but when the action comes upon the ship unexpectedly, all these orders have to be begun

on the spur of the moment, and without proper knowledge of what is happening.

It was all over in five minutes. The Japanese had dashed through the roadstead at thirty knots, past a line of a dozen big ships 300 yards apart, and had fired their torpedoes as they flew by, disappearing as swiftly as they came. In the five minutes some of the Russian guns had barely got ready to fire, others had banged away hastily, and a few kept on firing at shadows of the night. Searchlights were working fantastically in every direction now, like huge silvery windmill-arms hurrying round and round the horizon. After a few minutes of noise and confusion, it began to be understood that the enemy had gone for the present; and there was breathing time—time to realize what it all meant and how it had resulted.

From the masthead of the battleship *Petropaulovsk*, flagship of Admiral Starck, a signal-light winked and blinked its dot-and-dash message to the fleet, 'Each ship report what has happened on board,' and after a few minutes the replies all began coming :—

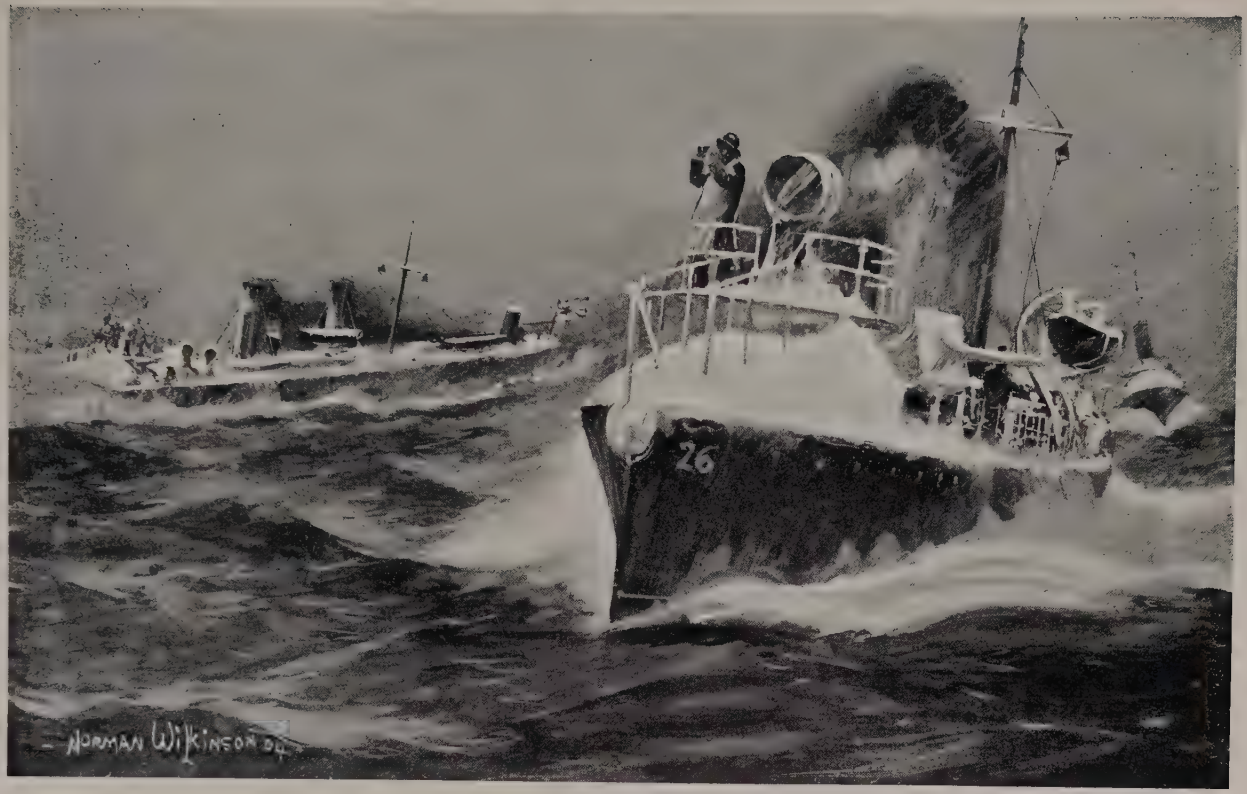
Battleship *Tsarevitch*, struck by a torpedo near the stern, leaking badly, rudder damaged; must try to get inside the harbour at once, using the twin propellers to turn the ship if the rudder could not be made to answer. Battleship *Retvizan*, struck by torpedo a little aft of the engine-room, leaking badly; also must go inside the harbour. Armoured cruiser *Pallada*, struck amidships by torpedo, leaking badly; must go in. Other ships not hurt, as far as can be ascertained. All now on the look-out for the enemy, but nothing in sight.

The forts on shore also signalled that they could

make out nothing with their searchlights ; an occasional shot was fired at something in the distance, but whether a real or imaginary enemy nobody could be sure.

The desultory firing had all died away in about half an hour. It was now midnight, and the Japanese destroyers were twenty miles away from the port, drawing together and signalling to each other with lanterns—for the Russians would not be able to see at such a distance. Every boat was there, and uninjured. After half an hour for rest and supper they would make another dash, but it would be more dangerous this time, for the Russians were sure to be keeping a better look-out, and more prepared to open fire at any moment.

First, two of the Japanese boats were sent forward to get as near as possible without being seen, and report what could be made out of the Russians. These two returned in half an hour, and reported that the Russians were still at anchor, except two small cruisers now steaming about on the outer edge of the fleet, and some that seemed to be moving into the inner port. The Russians are not skilful at handling a ship, and almost invariably require a tugboat to bring a big vessel into a narrow channel ; but these had to try under their own steam now. Though they had had fires banked for a week or more, and had the most up-to-date engines and boilers, they were not quick at getting up steam, and the Japanese could see, amid the flashing of all the Russian searchlights, that most of the ships still had their anchors down. Sounds travel over the water wonderfully at night ; a winch hoisting up an anchor-chain can be heard five miles with a favouring wind. So the two scout-boats were able to



Dirty Weather outside Port Arthur.

report to the waiting flotilla, 'Russian ships mostly unmoved.'

And now, all lights out again, full speed ahead, the destroyers neared the coast of Liaotung, about ten miles east of Port Arthur, and then crept along the shore as close as the depth allowed them to get. Thus the headlands kept them out of sight till within a few minutes' dash of the enemy, skimming along, almost within stone's-throw of the cliffs and the rugged granite rocks at their feet. If a funnel should glow, or a light appear anywhere on the little craft, the Russian sentries on the hills would see, and all the hopes of the Japanese might end in a sudden and awful death. Through the driving, icy spray, mingling now with spiteful wind-puffs of snow, the sailors stared ahead into the impenetrable gloom till their eyes nearly started from their sockets, trying to make out the frowning land batteries, the harbour mouth and the ships now waiting to turn loose their terrible storm of shot and shell. Silently, swiftly, the little craft groped their way along the shore, till, rounding the last curve of the land, they darted into the fierce white glare of the searchlight.

Then, with blood at fever-heat in the intensity of the strain, while their fingers were almost too frozen to press the firing-key of torpedo-tube and machine-gun, there came first a crack and a flash, a lurid glare like a tongue of lightning from the darkest blotch between the streaks of light, and instantly a hundred roaring voices of 50-ton guns, and barking, rattling 'pom-poms' and 'wop-wops,' thunder of huge explosions and hiss of seething waters, impact of crashing steel on steel, the spit-pit of bullets, and the boom

of the upheaving earthquake when a torpedo strikes home.

Five minutes finished it, again. The onrushing destroyers had not been sighted until they were within two miles; they made a circular course into the anchorage and out, getting within a half-mile of the ships, and the distance through which they had to run the gauntlet of most dangerous fire was not more than two miles in all, or four minutes' race for life. In that little time it is not easy for a gunner to get a big gun pointed at a swiftly moving object, or rather, not at it, but at a nicely-calculated spot in front of it, and the temptation is to get the shot fired off anyhow and hope it will hit. Hoping for the best is not good gunnery. And the gunner has to remember that his own ships are all around him, and his ship has swung at anchor whichever way the tide carried it; he hardly knows where it is safe to fire in the darkness, with puzzling, shifting streaks of electric light dancing over it. By the time that he is sure which is friend and which is enemy, guessed the range, allowed for headway on the moving target, fired once, missed, and reloaded, the tiny boat is out of sight. He fires after it, or after the place where he thinks it may be, but there is plenty of room to miss. . . . For some minutes afterwards the Russians, in sullen anger and disappointment, kept up a random fire into the dark distance.

The Japanese had ten destroyers at work, and they fired altogether eighteen torpedoes that night. The first attack was between 11.30 and midnight, the second after 2 a.m. The boats all came through without serious injury, and headed away eastward for Elliott Island, where they duly arrived about daylight. Mean-

time, the battleships and cruisers had steamed off to the southward, and were making a wide sweep round to approach Port Arthur from the opposite direction about daylight, for the Russian fleet must in any event be stopped from going abroad to do damage. Torpedo craft cannot do anything against big ships in daylight, and Admiral Togo had to be ready for a decisive battle in the open sea as soon as the Russians should show themselves. He did not wait to hear from his destroyers, because he had this to do all the same, whether they had news for him or not.

But the Russians were in no mood for coming out; very much to the contrary. For the time they were badly demoralized. The attack had been a complete surprise, and they were almost in a panic, wondering what was going to happen to them next.

In the evening of the attack there had been a dinner-party and dance at the house of Admiral Starck, in honour of his wife's birthday. The majority of the captains and other officers of the fleet attended, leaving on board each ship only two or three juniors. There were also army officers present, leaving some of the forts in the care of subordinates. At the same time there was a performance of Baroufsky's Circus going on in the town. This circus is well known all over the Far East, and was last on view at the Osaka Exhibition of 1903. In remote towns of the Orient such as Port Arthur amusements are few, and the arrival of any travelling company like this is a great event. The Russians are a pleasure-loving people, rather more given to gaiety and revelry than most Europeans, and very much more so than Japanese or Chinese. Every port in the East knows that the

sailormen of all nationalities are fond of going ashore on the spree, and the Russians easily take premier place.

How large a proportion of the bluejackets had shore leave that night it is difficult to say, but it is certain that the circus was well filled with officers and sailors, all bent on having a rollicking good time. Besides the circus and the Admiral's ball, there was a good business doing in the café chantant and numerous other places. Port Arthur was notoriously a place of much dissipation, and, by comparison with it, such towns as Shanghai and Tientsin, Hongkong and Yokohama, though larger and busier, were the extreme of sedateness. I say this from a thorough knowledge of nearly all ports in the Far East.

Amid the revelry the sound of guns came like a thunder-clap. It was not like the historic night before Waterloo, when British officers attended a ball at Brussels, expecting a call to arms, and ready for it. The Russians expected nothing; absolutely, they could not understand what the sound meant. Some said: 'It must be some newly-arrived warships from Europe saluting'—for some were known to be on the way, and men's ideas of time are not always precise. Others said: 'Ships do not salute at eleven o'clock at night; it must be some new sort of firing practice or night manœuvres.' But there would hardly be manœuvres or any important work going on with so many of the principal officers on shore. So at last men came to the conclusion: 'Perhaps it is an alarm; somebody must have thought the Japanese were here already. What an idea! We shall know in the morning.' And as the firing ceased, nobody cared any more about it.

The circus performance was capital, and the refreshment-bar attached was doing a roaring trade. When that closed, some time after twelve, there were the cafés, the club, and other places. Soon everybody would be at the war; this was the last chance for a 'good time.'

CHAPTER VI

ADMIRAL TOGO AT PORT ARTHUR

NEXT morning, towards seven o'clock, tired-looking officers, with white faces, could be seen making their way down to the jetty, looking for their boats, to get aboard their ships. Some still wore their evening-dress uniform, with shoes to match, and most of them looked anxious. Some boats had just come ashore, bringing incredible stories of happenings in the night, and messengers were hurrying about the town, looking in likely and unlikely places for officers who were supposed to have been aboard since eight o'clock the night before, by order. From a hurried word or two, heard at random as men came and went, it seemed there had been something very terrible; but the stories seemed impossible. Then, as ghastly proof that some part was only too true, there came ashore a boat-load of wounded, then a boat filled with dead.

From any part of the town, except the old part near the dock, one could clearly see the *Retvizan* and *Tsarevitch* stuck in the harbour entrance, seemingly wrecked. These two were the finest ships of the whole fleet, and there they were, half-sunk, obstructing the fairway, and heeling over like drunken men. If the two huge battleships, of 13,000 and 12,700 tons, had

been so badly hurt, there was every reason to dread the worst.

No sooner had they got 'all hands aboard' than the Russian ships found the Japanese coming at them again. Something must be done; it would not do to stand still to be shot at, like last night.

By the time some of the Russian ships had weighed anchor and got the propellers going, the Japanese were already away again, without firing a shot. They had come just to see and report. Admiral Togo had been cruising in the open, out of sight of land, about thirty or forty miles away, so as to have plenty of sea-room to swoop down on the enemy if he should come out; and three of the fastest and lightest cruisers—the *Yoshino*, *Takasago*, and *Chitose*—were sent in to see 'how the land lay.' By eight o'clock they were near enough to see without coming within range; and they steamed slowly past Port Arthur, at a distance of nearly seven miles, plying their telescopes intently. Rear-Admiral Dewa was in command, on the *Takasago*, and he signalled by wireless telegraph to Admiral Togo that the two best ships of the enemy were aground and partly sinking; one cruiser the same; other ships not in anything like good fighting array. He advised an onslaught immediately.

The Russians slowly hauled up their huge, antiquated anchors, stopping to wash the thick mud off the chains link by link as the winches turned. This was a striking example of clumsy method; at such a time it would have been better to slip cable—that is to say, leave the anchor at the bottom, and put a buoy to hold the end of the chain, thereby letting the ship steam away at once, without having to wait and haul

up anchor. The best way of all, and the only business-like way for a proper naval station such as Port Arthur was supposed to be, would be to have permanent buoys well moored with 'mushroom' anchors, so that a ship would not need to put its own anchor down at all, but simply make fast to the buoy—the work of two or three minutes at most.

It is just by being a little smarter and more up-to-date, by gaining two or three minutes here and there, that the Japanese easily managed to deliver their blow first every time. The Russians tried to give chase to the Japanese cruisers, but only the little *Boyarin*, 3,000 tons, was ready to go after them as they drew off eastward. She followed them for awhile to see what she could see of their movements—for she was a 22-knot boat intended for scouting duty. Halfway over towards the Elliott Islands she perceived that the three Japanese were going to meet their main squadron, for there gradually became visible on the sky-line first two or three tiny wisps of smoke, then six or eight, then too many to count, and mastheads of ships were beginning to show at the foot of each wisp. By the time the *Boyarin* had slowed down, and turned to run home and report, the whole Japanese fleet was in sight and coming after her, or, at any rate, heading for Port Arthur. So she scurried back with the news, firing her stern guns as she ran ; not that there was much chance of doing damage with light weapons at such long range to ships coming end-on ; still, there was a chance, and she did her best.

On the hill-tops of Port Arthur the lookout men saw the chase, and telephoned down to the town and the Commandant. In the harbour all was commotion.

Steam-launches and powerful tow-boats were puffing here and there ; captains' gigs and roomy 16-oar cutters full of stalwart Swede and Finn sailors were skimming across the water ; huge vessels getting under way were tooting their whistles to clear the course ; chains were clanking, and winches rattling ; orders were bellowed in stentorian tones from the bridges of fifty ships, large and small. Big empty lighters were being manœuvred alongside the crippled *Retvizan* and *Tsarevitch*, to help them float ; on each lighter a gang of Chinese coolies, willing to work and only bewildered by angry shouts in a language they did not understand ; captains stamping about their quarter-decks, demanding why their ships were not put in fighting trim before ; sullen sailors heaving overboard all the movable articles of wood and other inflammable material, benches, tables, beds and bedding—everything that occupies valuable space, might catch fire, and has no fighting value ; Chinese boatmen sculling about in their sampans, picking up as much as they could of this jetsam ; and now, at the moment when all should have been ready, the little steamer *Yenisei*, only just back from Dalny on a mine-laying trip there, is beginning to put down submarine mines outside the line of Russian warships here.

Admiral Starck had ordered that all the ships should get under way, for a motionless ship is obviously at a great disadvantage ; but if a ship is moving it must go somewhere, and there is not much room for a large fleet to be all on the move at once in a harbour. Roughly speaking, the outer roadstead of Port Arthur is a triangle, the base being the open sea, where the Japanese were advancing in single line, and the apex

being the narrow channel leading to the inner harbour. This channel is barely a quarter of a mile wide, and only about one-third of its width is safe for big ships at low tide. Two ships can pass at any time, but they must be very carefully handled. So there was no use in trying to get the fleet into the inner harbour now, and leave the forts to keep the enemy off. Accordingly, about half-past eight the whole fleet moved out and went a few miles eastward, but the three Japanese had got so far away that Admiral Starck returned and anchored again! Thus, when the main Japanese fleet came, the whole cumbersome process of getting the ships on the move had to begin afresh. In this fact lies the chief explanation of the result. The Japanese had no desire to stay and keep up a bombardment till one side or the other should be totally annihilated; they wanted merely to strike a blow and get off scot-free.

The coming of the Japanese was known a few minutes before eleven, and the flagship *Mikasa* opened fire with a 12-inch shell at 11.15 (the Japanese time seems to have differed by about an hour from the Port Arthur time). Each Japanese ship used only its heaviest guns—8, 10, or 12-inch calibre—the range being 8,000 to 9,000 yards, or not less than five miles. Though the guns could fire as quickly as twice a minute, such a rate is only used at easy ranges, and the order was to make every shot tell—never mind about quickness. But the sixteen ships had among them over sixty guns effective at this range, and if each gunner took as much as a minute or two sighting his piece before he got the aim to his satisfaction, that would still mean an average of one shell plumping into

the Russians every two or three seconds. Steaming at nine knots, it took the Japanese fifteen or twenty minutes to pass, and then they turned and repeated the process going east. Then they disappeared, and were not seen again for several days. They had done a good stroke of business for one day. Not a shot had been fired at random or at ships of minor importance ; several merchant steamers were in the harbour, and any one of them would probably have gone to the bottom if hit by a big shell, yet none had more than splinters and fragments to report. Nor was there much more among the smaller Russian warships. But the biggest had been all specially marked ; the huge flagship *Petropaulovsk* was struck several times, and so was the big battleship *Poltava*. The protected cruisers *Diana* and *Askold* had been severely damaged, and the little *Novik*, which persisted in running out to tackle the Japanese despite Admiral Starck's orders to stay under cover of the forts, had been badly injured in consequence.

Moreover, the forts on the hilltops, of which the Russians had been so proud, had been hit—not very seriously injured, it is true, but Japanese shells had managed to get home and show that they could do damage. One man was killed, six were wounded, and part of a fort was wrecked by a 12-inch shell. In the town the shells had been dropping as if from the sky, and causing terrible consternation, though not much serious damage. Between the town and the open sea is a barrier of hills on which the forts are, and it was probably in aiming at the forts that the Japanese happened to hit the town behind. Their one object was to cripple the enemy's fighting power, the

forts and warships, and until that was accomplished they had no time to waste a single shell on anything else.

The whole fight did not last an hour, but it left four Russian ships crippled, in addition to the three disabled during the night, and the streets of the town were thickly strewn with pieces of shells. Most of the buildings escaped, but here and there a smoking ruin told its tale. One man, a Russian newspaper correspondent, had half of his face torn off, including an eye, by scattered fragments of a building through which a shell came; another was struck on the head by part of a falling roof and killed. One of the most tragic pictures of the horrors of war was in the house of a merchant named Barwitz. A friend who had been to see him, and had gone away for a few minutes, returned to find that a shell had struck the house, and the sight was too horrible to contemplate. Mr. Barwitz and his wife, child, and native nurse had been in one room; only the child, a four-year-old girl, was now alive, sitting on the floor amid mangled fragments of human flesh, scarcely recognisable. The mother had been completely blown to pieces; her body was not found, but her long hair and part of her head, her clothing in shreds, a hand with rings on the fingers, were all that could be identified. The native nurse also had been blown into small fragments, and the body of Mr. Barwitz, nearly intact, was lying in a corner of the room, with only the head shattered.

Another thrilling scene was described by a Russian officer in one of the forts between the town and the sea, on Electric Hill, where the signal station was:

'Our battery is near the edge of a cliff, 300 feet

above the sea, and beneath the cliff is a small battery of machine-guns to greet any attempt at landing or creeping in boats close along the shore. In one minute those pretty little things pour forth over ten thousand bullets on their errand of death. Our upper battery can sweep the sea to the very horizon. In the morning there was a clear sky, light breeze, and smooth sea. We saw some specks on the horizon, and they gradually enlarged to ships, sixteen of them, painted a dull gray. They are so far away, they seem hardly to move; but as the minutes pass the ships grow bigger and crawl along in front. They look like a line of tiny beads on a string, so evenly do they keep place in line. Below us are our ships, and the sailors like little ants running about the decks getting ready for the fight.

'Suddenly there is a small puff of white from the first Japanese ship, and we wait for the boom. Just as it sounds there is a splash in the water, and a column of spray shoots up and vanishes. We begin to discuss whether the splash came just before the boom, or just after. I think they were together. But it is time for us to begin. As we make ready, crash! There is an explosion on the face of the hill just below our fort, and fragments of rock are thrown out with a big, black cloud of smoke. And now all the ships are firing, both ours and theirs; the din passes all comprehension. I give an order, yet I cannot hear my own voice, and the men stare. They see my lips move, but it is as if the insides of our ears had exploded. We have nearly 200 great guns, all roaring and thundering together. The fumes of our own charges get into our eyes, and nostrils, and throats, but it is a sweet and

invigorating perfume. We must be hit soon, for shells are striking the earth and rock all around us. The enemy can easily hit our great hill, but we have only a small mark to aim at, at the longest range. Someone clutches me. I turn, and see a soldier falling, his head cut open by a flying fragment.

'Now shrapnel is bursting over us, in front of us. It seems to crash and patter right in our faces. It is a mad, murderous orgie of real fireworks and real blood. There is a singing in the air, not unlike the sound of the wind in telegraph wires or in the pine-woods in a dry winter; but this sound is less steady—it rises and falls: it is the hum of the shells in the air. Then a crash like a box of crockery falling from a height, and pebbles and dust dance up from the ground around us. A soldier has part of his shoulder wrenched off, and the flesh hangs jagged and dripping red. I knew him. He was the Colonel's orderly till one day he bungled something; but he will bungle no more now! The rest of the men are keeping on with the work; they merely step across the corpse; there is no time to remove it just now. There is only time to go on shelling the Japanese, and we must be doing destruction among them. At last they are moving out of our reach, and not firing at us any more. We are on a height, and so may reach them yet a little longer. But they are steaming off rapidly; they have had all they want from us, and it must have been a severe lesson to them. We had, after all, only three or four men killed.'

Admiral Togo had achieved enough for the first day. He had made it practically certain that the Russian fleet would not go across to shell the coast towns of Japan, nor escort transports bearing an army of in-

ONE OF THE SEAWARD FORTS AT PORT ARTHUR—VIEWED FROM THE REAR.

EXPLODED MAGAZINE AT ONE OF THE FORTS.

vasion either to Japan or Korea. It was not to be expected that the Russian fleet could be destroyed, or Port Arthur seriously damaged, at the very outset, but it was a great thing to have struck a severe blow and received practically nothing in return. It was a still greater thing to have given the Japanese sailors their first experience of fighting against Europeans with such success. It was a great thing to have driven the Russians at Port Arthur (and doubtless at St. Petersburg also) into a state bordering on panic, and it was most valuable of all to have insured a safe passage for the army of Japan across the sea. And all this without any ship being materially injured, and with only five men killed and about fifty wounded, as against seven Russian ships crippled, seventeen men killed, and sixty-four wounded, according to the official reports published later.

Some of the merchant steamers in Port Arthur had exciting experiences. The British steamer *Columbia*, regularly trading between Chefoo and Port Arthur, was anchored in the outer harbour on the night of February 8, near the warships. Those on board her were first aware of the torpedo attack by feeling, rather than hearing, two or three violent submarine explosions, before a single gun had been fired. Then began first a crackling sound of machine-gun fire, followed soon by heavier guns, drums beating, and bugles sounding the alarm. Only one searchlight had been at work before, but now the sky and sea appeared to be criss-crossed with long white streaks in all directions. Steam-launches and torpedo-boats swirled past in the darkness, but in a few minutes everything was as quiet as if nothing had ever happened. Then towards two

o'clock in the morning the firing began again, and those on the *Columbia* could make out that the two big Russian battleships, *Retvizan* and *Tsarevitch*, were shifting position, and had got right across the fairway leading to the inner harbour—a peculiar manœuvre which the spectators did not understand until they learned the reason in the morning. Just before three o'clock the *Columbia* people were again disturbed from their sleep by a Russian naval officer coming on board asking all sorts of questions, names of everybody on board, their business, and so on, in half English and half French. At half-past five another officer came to say that Viceroy Alexieff had ordered that no ship must either enter or leave the harbour until further notice; though how ships that had not yet arrived were to know of this order against entering it was not stated.

As daylight came, the *Columbia* could make out the injured vessels, one settling down by the head, and one with its stern half sunk. Also they saw the *Pallada* ashore near them, with a heavy list to port. Towards seven o'clock there was enough light to see far out, and the *Columbia* noted that the Russian cruisers were moving about in the offing, as if to look for the cause of their excitement in the night; and very far off there were just visible the masts and funnels, but not the hulls, of three cruisers, perhaps seven miles away. Gradually these drew nearer, and the Russians came into the anchorage. At last it could be seen that the three distant vessels had the 'Rising Sun' flag, and then the whole situation became clear. It was like an electric shock, for the Russians had always said, and everybody had quite readily

believed, that the Japanese would never dream of daring to attack the Russians right in their famous stronghold. Then a Russian guard was placed aboard the *Columbia*, and she was warned in the strictest manner not to go away till she got permission. But there was a training ship which had been in an exposed berth in the outer anchorage, and she was wanting to get more inshore for shelter, so the *Columbia* was told to shift her berth a little and make room, and this order was made the excuse for creeping along, and ultimately getting clear away to Chefoo, despite the protests of the guards on board.

But long before getting away the *Columbia* saw the main body of the Japanese coming; and great was the surprise of the people on the merchant ship to see the Russian warships having so much trouble with their antiquated wooden-stocked anchors, and the lumbering tackle with which the anchors were 'fished,' while the enemy was bearing down on them at full speed in perfect readiness for a terrific fight. The surprise of the spectators deepened into scorn when they saw the warships near them begin putting overboard beds, tables, chairs, boxes and bundles of lumber, and even ping-pong sets! Meanwhile, the shower of shells began, and the Russians were hit several times by the first few shots, long before they had begun to reply. The Russians were all heading in different directions, boxed up too near each other, and in imminent danger of collisions to left and right of them, while it must have been impossible for many of the ships' guns to get a clear shot at the enemy. The little *Novik* was nearly rammed by one of her own lumbering companions, and in making a dash to get

out of trouble she got quite separated from the rest of the fleet, and was hotly peppered by the Japanese before she could come in again.

'How it ever happened that she got back at all, after having to make a big sweep round, broadside on, is a marvel,' said one of the *Columbia's* officers. 'Then I saw a shell burst right at the stern of a big three-funnelled battleship on the water-line, while some of the crew were still messing about with the anchor; some twenty or so of them were dragging a heavy fish-tackle forward to it. The explosion blotted out everything in black smoke, the way the wind came between us, and before I could get another look up came another big warship, so we could not see what the damage had been that time. The cruiser *Askold* was near us on the other side; we saw her after-funnel carried away by a shell which made a tremendous burst and must have killed everybody in the neighbourhood. Her main-topmast also was hit, and came crashing down on deck, wrecking guns and gear and everything on the after-deck. Then another battleship was struck, full broadside on, by a heavy shell, which made a big blur of smoke, and then we saw the hole, right into the armour-plating, like a knot-hole in a deal board. Of course, we could see nothing of any effects inside, or just below water. Strange to say, the cruisers mostly took positions further out than the battleships, perhaps only because they moved more easily, or because they needed to get nearer the enemy on account of their lighter guns. But it seemed very certain that each ship was managing itself in any sort of way that happened to be convenient, with no general plan or combined action whatever. They

were so bunched that it took half of their efficiency away. We could also see plenty of the Japanese shells reaching right to the tops of the hills, and shifting big heaps of sand and stones all about them.

'All the time we were racing away along the shore westward to get out of it. One heavy shell ducked just under our bow and sent a shower up forward, the concussion shaking our little steamer like a leaf; another burst aft, covering our stern with spray and smoke, and we at first thought we were done for, but it had just missed. One large shell sailed right over us, but at a good height, and it must have been spent, for we could see it turning over and over as it went; it seemed about two or three feet long and a foot in diameter. It hit the base of the hill behind us, and stirred up a ton or two of soil. We would probably have had fewer shells about us if it had not been for the *Novik;* she had advanced in the same direction as we were moving, and drew fire from the Japanese. She was fighting very pluckily, dodging backwards and forwards at good speed, and all the guns going as hard as they could; but she has only a light armament, and it probably had little effect at such a distance. It was lucky for us that there was so little chance for the small guns—6-inch and less—or there would have been such a hail that we could hardly have expected to come through.

'About the time that we got clear the firing ceased, and the Japanese steamed away, in single line, as they had come, just as trim and regular as a file of soldiers on parade. There was, of course, nothing to show us how they had got on in the matter of damages, but they ought to have been worse off than the Russians,

seeing what a difference the forts would make. On the other hand, at five or six miles it is easier for a moving ship to hit a fixed target than for a fixed gun to hit a moving ship, especially when the exact distance, exact speed, and exact course steered—in fact, all the information that makes a difference between hit and miss—is at the disposal of the one and only guesswork with the other. And if a Japanese shot missed, they could see where it hit the hillside, and it helped them with their next shot; whereas when a Russian shot missed, it was impossible to see at that range how far wide it was, or how much over or under. No Russian ship was sunk, in the time we were there, but several were damaged considerably. The three stranded ones were fighting well, and were getting a good share of the enemy's attention.'

The Norwegian steamer *Kumar* was also at Port Arthur on the 8th, and was chartered on that day—*i.e.*, before the torpedo attack—to take away civilian residents from Port Arthur, as the Russian authorities had on that day notified non-combatants to leave. Viceroy Alexieff had, of course, full knowledge that there was going to be a fight, but he had hardly expected it so soon. The vessel left Port Arthur at 6.30 p.m. on the 8th, and was met and scrutinized by the Japanese fleet at two o'clock in the morning, about sixty miles south-east of the port.

The British steamer *Fuping*, of the Chinese Engineering and Mining Company, had a very bad time in Port Arthur. She arrived there on Friday, February 5, with a cargo of Kaiping coal for the Russian navy. By the 8th she had finished unloading, and was ready to leave next morning. Her

people heard all that the *Columbia* heard in the night; and next morning they saw the three big Russian ships ashore. The captain and three officers went in a gig to have a good look at the stranded vessels, when suddenly a shell struck the shore quite near their boat. This was a little after eleven o'clock, and they had not noticed the Japanese fleet coming up. The first shell was closely followed by a second, which burst so near them that one of the Chinese crew of their gig had part of his scalp torn off. The other Chinese at once sprang overboard in a fright and swam ashore. The four officers put the boat up on the beach and took shelter behind a large rock, from which they had an excellent view of the fight. Afterwards they went through the town, and saw several places where Japanese shells had blasted great holes in the roadway, 6 feet deep and 10 feet wide. Many windows were shattered by the concussion, and some big stacks of coal near the dock had been scattered far and wide by shells, but for some strange reason had not caught fire. The townspeople were in the wildest possible panic; some quite hysterical with fear. The Russo-Chinese Bank people got all their coin away in carts to the railway, and sent it up to Moukden or Harbin, while the entire stock of notes on hand was said to have been publicly burnt, as it represented a purely local issue. Government officials with armed guards took possession of all places where provisions were stored; many places of business were shut up and the owners fled. The railway-station was practically mobbed by a frantic crowd of people anxious to get away: women crying and piteously imploring, men struggling, children too frightened to speak or move.

Hundreds of refugees, chiefly Chinese, but some European also, crowded on board the *Fuping*, until there was 'standing-room only' on the ship, and a stiff voyage before her. Captain Gray was required to sign two papers—one stating that he would not divulge anything he had seen in Port Arthur to anybody, and another stating that he took away on his ship no more than three days' provisions. Then he was given permission to sail ; but as the *Fuping* steamed out of the harbour a shell came from a Russian ship, right across the deck, and then two shells burst in the 'tween deck, forward, among the densely-packed mass of Chinese passengers. Five of them were very badly wounded ; one poor girl had a leg completely severed from her body, a man had an arm torn off, another had his back lacerated and a rib fractured. The *Fuping* immediately stopped and put back, everybody filled with indignation and the worst apprehensions : it looked as if some of the Russians deliberately desired to perpetrate a cold-blooded butchery, and such things had not been unknown. Captain Gray was sent for, and went on board the Russian guardship, but the Commander simply said, 'We are sorry ; there was a mistake, and you can go.'

The *Hsiping* and *Chingping*, of the same Company, also happened to be in the zone of hostilities—the *Hsiping* under stress of weather and the *Chingping* on her usual voyage, not knowing anything of the outbreak of war—and they were fired at repeatedly and deliberately, the *Chingping* being hit nine times, while no fight was going on at all. The German steamer *Pronto* also was fired at continuously for about twenty minutes, and was struck about the masts and funnel,

besides having several holes in her hull above the water-line. All these boats were closely packed with refugees, and it is surprising that there was nobody killed, though several were injured. The firing was long after the Japanese had gone, and all three of these ships were ordered to go over to Dalny, escorted by a Russian Volunteer steamer, and detained there until the 16th without any reason whatever. The Russians simply said, 'It was a mistake.' It seems that they were so bewildered that they were all working at cross-purposes, issuing contradictory orders, forgetting what they had done, and leaving things half done.

On February 10 the Russians lost the *Yenisei*, a steamer of 2,500 tons, 17 knots, armed with a few small guns. She was specially built for the purpose of laying mines, and had a long overhanging counter, with a couple of port-holes on the under side of it, for lowering the mines and buoys. She was engaged in laying mines in a semicircle about two miles round the outer harbour of Port Arthur in rather rough weather, when one of them was washed against her rudder by a sudden wave, and immediately the vessel, with about 300 mines in her hold, blew up, and disappeared beneath the waves the next minute. Of her crew of 200 about 80 were picked up, but the Captain and the officer chiefly concerned with the laying of mines perished. From that time nobody knew where mines had been laid or where not, except in the vaguest way. The charts of mine-fields went down with the ship, and the Russian ships hardly dared move about anywhere now. Of course, there ought to have been complete charts made out and kept ashore before any

mines were laid at all, and then this terrible dilemma could not have arisen; but there was so much hurry and confusion that men did the wrong thing first, and the Captain of the *Yenisei* had hastened to do his work first and make a plan of it afterwards.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIGHT AT CHEMULPO.

On February 7 Admiral Togo detached a small squadron to go to Chemulpo, escorting troopships, and as two Russian warships had been reported at Chemulpo, the Japanese vessels had to keep the most careful watch and act according to circumstances. It was a risky move, for there might easily be a heavy loss of life, if there should be a fight and a shot should strike a ship filled with soldiers. The detached squadron consisted of the *Asama*, armoured cruiser, 9,750 tons, *Naniwa* and *Takachiho*, unarmoured, 3,727 tons each, and the *Suma* and *Akashi*, each 2,700 tons, two torpedo-boats, and three transports. Rear-Admiral Uriu was in command. He is an excellent type of Japanese naval officer, having had a four-years' course in a British naval training college, and another in America, twenty years ago. He is now about forty years old, and has a good record of war service already.

As the little squadron neared Chemulpo, the cruiser *Chiyoda* was met, about three o'clock in the morning, and was recognised by the lights she showed. She had been in Chemulpo up to the time of the outbreak of war, and had been notified by wire to be on the look-out at this particular place and time. As Russian

ships also might be about, a very out-of-the-way corner among the islands had been selected, so that the ships should know each other for Japanese by the mere fact of being there, without too much showing of lights from afar.

The *Chiyoda* drew near, and all the ships anchored for the night, the Rear-Admiral at once wanting to learn the latest condition of affairs in Chemulpo and Seoul, and to discuss the plan of action with all his captains. It was learnt that the *Varyag* and *Koreyetz* were still in the harbour, and that the Russians had been letting out hints to the Koreans about strong Russian forces coming to Seoul in a few days to 'temporarily' occupy all Korea as a warning to Japan. Korean officials on the northern frontier had reported Russian troops coming across the Yalu River into Korea within the last three days; but the reports all differed as to number, and no Korean report is to be taken very seriously. It was an open secret that the Captain of the *Varyag* had had a dispute with the Russian Minister, M. Pavloff, as to the movements of the two ships; the Captain said it was necessary, in view of the threatening outlook, that the vessels should rejoin the main squadron at Port Arthur, but the Minister objected to this, as it would leave him unprotected.

Meantime the two ships were seen to be making ready for war; and the *Chiyoda*, being only a little unarmoured cruiser, had not been in a very safe position the last few days. Japanese residents were in great alarm: Russian Legation guards at Seoul were blustering about more than ever; Koreans were all in a state of panic, and only too eager to fly whichever way the

wind might blow. Residents of other nationalities in Chemulpo and Seoul were inclined to believe that Russia was going to make a big move; and there were several foreign warships in the port—an exceptional thing at any time, especially in winter. There was no ice in the harbour; boats could land troops without difficulty if the Russians could be kept from interfering; all arrangements had been made for the Japanese soldiers without a soul knowing a word of the plan, outside of the two or three whose business it was. This was the *Chiyoda's* report.

A letter from Captain Bjelaieff, of the *Koreyetz*, published afterwards in the *Novoye Vremya*, throws a curious light on the state of affairs at this juncture. He wrote: 'I am ready to put to sea at any moment, as we are expecting war with Japan any day, and it is likely that fighting will begin before the formal declaration. All woodwork is being got out of my ship, and everything superfluous is sent ashore. We carry no armour-plating. We have enough fighting power to take the offensive as soon as required; our armament is very good, and the spirit of the men is excellent. Perhaps we Russians are apt to depend too much on this spirit, and expect it to do duty for everything, and we may come to grief over it. At any rate, I shall do my best, in hope of glorious victory; but if we perish, hold us in honourable memory.' The letter was dated January 9, so that there were, at any rate, some of the Russians who were under no misapprehension.

After talking matters over thoroughly, and making final dispositions for all contingencies, Rear-Admiral Uriu got his ships under way in the forenoon of the

8th (Monday), and steamed at moderate speed to Chemulpo. About three or four o'clock in the afternoon he arrived in the outer anchorage, and it was then the first shot of the whole war was fired, by the *Koreyetz*. But there was no fight. The smoke from the Japanese transports had been visible as a dark cloud on the sky-line for over half an hour, and the *Koreyetz* lifted her anchor and steamed towards the smoke. It was said by some that she was going over to Port Arthur with despatches, or to ask for instructions ; by others, that she expected Russian troopships and went to meet them. Her own Captain is reported to have said that he went out simply for a little ordinary target practice. Whatever be the real explanation, the fact remains that the *Koreyetz* did meet the Japanese ships just outside the harbour, about 3.30, and did fire a shot in their direction. The Japanese did not fire back, probably waiting for a second shot to make sure if it was meant in earnest ; but the torpedo-boats changed their course a little, as if to attack, while the other ships moved on to their anchorage, and the *Koreyetz* re-entered the harbour ahead of the whole squadron, resuming her former berth.

Chemulpo harbour is a strange place ; at high tide it seems to be a wide stretch of roadstead, with a few rocky, grass-grown islands scattered over it, and the ships anchor three to five miles off shore, some of them hidden behind two of the islands. At low tide one sees the reason : miles and miles of black mud come up in all directions, and there remains only a narrow, winding stream dodging between the islands and searching to the southward for an open sea that seems to have got lost.

COSSACKS LIGHTING A BEACON TO GIVE WARNING OF JAPANESE FLANKING MOVEMENT.

One of the troopships made its way into the inner harbour, quite near the town. The others waited outside, with the warships, and the torpedo-boats anchored near the Russian vessels, to keep watch. This took place between 4 p.m. and dusk. By six o'clock it was pitch dark, and boat-loads of Japanese troops began lining up alongside the jetty, and, company by company, the men stepped ashore, each man carrying his complete kit, in full marching order, ready to take the field forthwith. The transports had many more boats than steamers ordinarily carry, and each ship did all its own lighterage. As there is no such thing in Korea as a street-lamp or a pier-head light, the Japanese quickly set up small wood bonfires at intervals on the quayside, to show the boats the way, and to help the troops on their march up into the town. Everything was done as quietly and mechanically as if the men had done this every day of their lives, and when orders had to be given they were given without shouting; no bugle-call, no roll of drum, no sound beyond the swing of oars, tramp of feet, a slight rattle of weapons, and subdued voices everywhere. The spectators made more noise, for nearly all Chemulpo had assembled. It was most amazing; the Russians were expected, and here were the Japanese!

The captains of the Russian vessels were in a quandary. They had no information. Should they consider that hostilities had commenced, or not? Ought they to fire on these invaders? That would mean to court disaster. Ought they to go away? That would be strange indeed. Ought they to wait with folded hands? That—for brave sailors of a great Power?

There was the British cruiser *Talbot* (Captain Bayley—not the Bayley who became so well known at Tientsin in the Boxer time). There were the United States cruiser *Vicksburg* (Captain Marshall); the French *Pascal* (Captain Sennes); the Italian *Elba* (Captain Borea). There was also a Korean 'warship,' the *Yangmu*, but of even less importance than most things of the Korean Government. Captain Stefanoff, of the *Varyag*, had the British, French, American, and Italian captains dining with him that evening, and informally the situation was discussed. News had come from Fusan overland, before the arrival of Admiral Uriu's squadron, that a Russian steamer, the *Moukden*, had been seized by a Japanese warship, the *Seiyen*, at Fusan, on Sunday, and the *Argun* had been seized by the *Azuma* near Masampo about the same time. Now, here was a strong force, evidently with fighting orders: what should be done? All the foreign captains agreed that it would not be right to fight in Chemulpo harbour, and obviously there would not be any fight if the question rested with the Russians, on account of the disparity in numbers. But if the Japanese should open fire? It would, of course, be the duty of the Russians to fire back, even against such odds—but how about the neutrality of the port, and neutral ships at anchor? The American captain did not feel called upon to take active steps, further than holding his ship in readiness for emergencies; the others thought it might be well to caution the Japanese against hasty action.

However, no definite decision was arrived at that night; the landing of the Japanese troops finished about 2 a.m., the transports hauled up anchor and

crept out quietly in the dark to a sheltered place among the islands, far from the harbour limits, and before daylight the warships followed them. Each Japanese house in the town had taken in a half-dozen or dozen soldiers as lodgers for the night, and put them up in a matter-of-fact way, as if they had been members of the family all their lives. Only here and there some delighted and tireless host would keep his guests awake to tell them how the *Chiyoda* had been for weeks hard at work drilling her men night and day, till they must be as sharp as a glittering keen sword-blade, while the Russian ship alongside never showed a sign of life, never a night-alarm or a 'boats out,' no 'clear for action' or gun-drill, nothing to be seen on board but smoking stove-pipes sticking out of close-shut cabins, and one man on deck looking half asleep all the time. Meanwhile, Chemulpo town slumbered in perfect peace, as if it was not on the verge of a volcano threatening instant eruption.

Early next morning Rear-Admiral Uriu sent a letter to Captain Stefanoff saying that a state of hostilities had arisen, and the Russian ships must therefore leave the neutral harbour of Chemulpo, or it would be necessary for the Japanese to come in and attack them. At the same time the Japanese Consul notified the other consuls in a similar sense, and the foreign warships were notified that, if the Japanese should find it necessary to come in after the Russians, foreign ships should get out of the way of the firing. The time mentioned for the Russians to leave was noon, February 9; the time for the firing in the event of their staying was 4 p.m.

This was a short and sharp method of bringing

matters to a climax. The Russian captains hurried off to the other warships to consult; and it was agreed that there ought to be a joint protest sent to the Japanese, telling them they had no right to come into a neutral port to fight. At the same time, the neutral captains warned the Russians that the Japanese might disregard the protest and leave the Governments to settle any dispute. In that case, suggested Captain Stefanoff, would it not be the neutral warships' duty to forcibly restrain the Japanese, either by opening fire on them, or at least by interposing, and escorting the Russians out to the open sea? No, they said, they could not do that; they could hardly go beyond a mere verbal protest, and, as that might be disregarded, the best thing would be for the Russians to go out and take their chance, unless they were willing to surrender at once. That was not to be thought of, so the Russians made up their minds to go out and face their doom. They were trapped; it was the fortune of war, and there was no help for it. Nichevo! Never mind!

Still, as a matter of form, the British, French, and Italian captains sent to the Japanese a protest against any fighting in port, but the American did not see the use of it, under the circumstances, and he did not sign. In the end, the document did not reach Admiral Uriu in time.

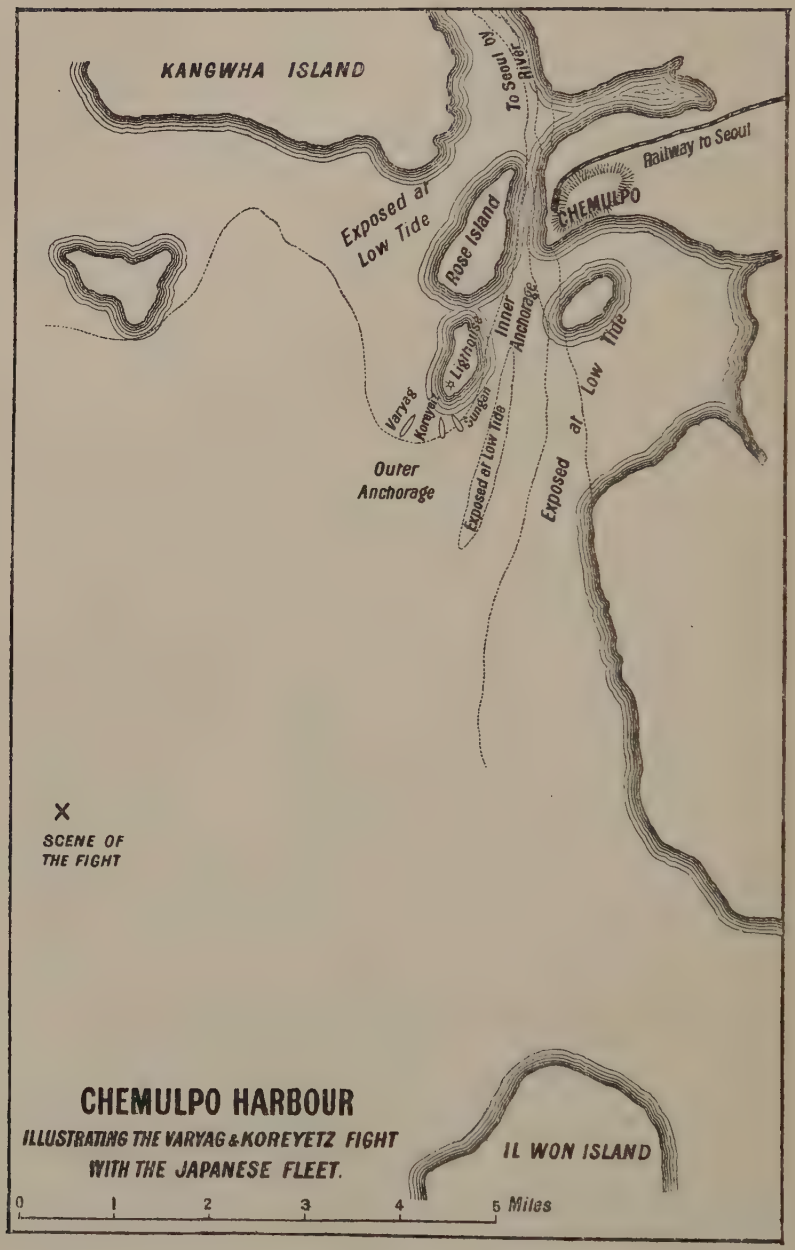
I saw something like this before, when the Spaniards in Manila had to choose between a surrender and a hopeless fight, and when they went forth to their death, for the sake of honour—'Por ser caballero.' But death itself has no great terrors for soldier or sailor, when the foe is great, like the United States, and defeat is no disgrace. Here it was no mere

matter of dying in a glorious battle, but it was the bitter prospect of succumbing to the hated and despised little Japanese, heathen and barbarian, as the Russian considered. Yet there was no help; there was nothing for it but to fight, and die.

In utter desperation, the Russian warships cleared for action. No need to be particular; no use to save anything now. Overboard went everything movable, even tea and coffee sets, doors of deck-houses and hatch-covers, for men said grimly: 'If we must go to our death, we do not want wood splinters in it!'

A little after eleven o'clock, the *Koreyetz* began to move out, through a harbour littered plentifully with her belongings. The *Varyag* was to do more real fighting, and took a little longer preparing. As the gunboat turned and headed for the open sea, the crews of all the other ships in port crowded to the bulwarks and cheered the gallant Russians again and again, for, at such a time, every heart went out to them. All the townsfolk had gathered on the hillside overlooking the harbour, miles away from the ships; and even those who never had liked the Russians felt full of pity for them now.

The first shot was fired by the flagship *Asama*, about a quarter to twelve—an 8-inch shell, at 4,000 yards' range, across the bows of the gunboat, as an invitation to give up the unequal contest and avoid needless slaughter. The *Koreyetz* replied with her whole broadside, but only her 8-inch guns were likely to do any damage at that distance. Still, it was to be the end of the old ship, so she might as well fire everything. Then came the Japanese answer: only a half-dozen more shells from the *Asama*, and the


KANGWHA ISLAND
To Seoul River
Railway to Seoul
CHEMULPO
Exposed at Low Tide
Rose Island
Inner Anchorage
Lighthouse
Varyag
Koreyetz
Sungari
Outer Anchorage
Exposed at Low Tide
Exposed at Low Tide
SCENE OF THE FIGHT
CHEMULPO HARBOUR
ILLUSTRATING THE VARYAG & KOREYETZ FIGHT WITH THE JAPANESE FLEET.
IL WON ISLAND
0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

Koreyetz was pierced through and through, leaking so rapidly that it seemed she must sink before she could get back into shelter. She certainly could not go on; she would not haul down her flag, and she did not want to sink out there. So back she came, less than a quarter of an hour after she had started. She just managed to reach shallow water in time, and sank on the mud, on an even keel, her deck still standing out of the water.

Next the *Varyag* started out, just as the *Koreyetz* was turning back. It seemed as if the Japanese had been specially holding their fire for this big and fast cruiser, and several of them took part in attacking her. She made a brave rush at them, turning a little to use her whole port broadside at once, then turning again to fire her starboard guns, and nearing them at full speed. But the fire was too heavy; her decks were being torn and riven, and men were dashed down in mangled heaps all round each gun, for the guns had no shields to protect the crews. Like the furious wind-squalls in the height of a hurricane came the bursting of terrible explosives all the length of the ship, shattering and burning and sweeping away men and pieces of machinery indiscriminately. The *Varyag* could not live to rush through the Japanese squadron; she must turn away, and try to pass at a distance. Then the steering gear was wrecked by a bursting projectile, and she could only stop the engines for a while, until the hand steering-wheel could be got going.

Thus the minutes passed, while the Japanese kept up their fierce fire, and of the 160 men on the upper deck, working guns or at other duties, barely half remained even able to stand, not counting minor

injuries. Dead and wounded were so many that there were not enough men left to carry them below. As the Captain stood on the bridge amid the hail of shot and shell, his orderly beside him was struck and knocked clear into the sea, together with a part of the bridge, and the next moment a bugler on the other side of the Captain was struck down, falling from the bridge to the deck. Part of the same shell tore out a piece of the Captain's face. A case of ammunition that had been brought up on deck was set on fire by a shell, and burned up so fiercely that two men were burned to death ; one of them fell down the ammunition hoist, his clothes all in a blaze. The men who tried to get the wounded away on stretchers, to be carried below to the doctor, were themselves wounded and struck down. A 4-inch gun was struck, blown clean from the mounting, and thrown to the opposite side of the ship. Several other guns were disabled, and the ship was set on fire in five different places. Some of the enemy's shells must have made holes in the *Varyag's* hull below the water-line, for she was filling with water ; one of the stokeholds was flooded. The men in the engine-room and stokeholds did their work as calmly as if there was no fight at all, and none of them received any injury. They had to steer the ship by means of the propellers after the steering-gear was shot away.

The noise was so deafening on deck that the Captain had great difficulty in issuing orders. Two men were stationed in the maintop, working a signal to indicate to the different gunners what the range should be. These two were both wounded, and one of them had his leg pinned down by some broken steelwork, so that

the only way to release him was to cut away a portion of the leg. Shrapnell shells were bursting all the time with deadly accuracy, filling the air like rain, and the fight grew more than ever hopeless and impossible. A huge rent in the side of the ship was now letting in volumes of water, and she was going over to the port side.

So, after fifty minutes of death and destruction, she was slowly turned round and headed for shoal-water in the harbour. Her boats were riddled with holes, and her bridge was a mere mass of twisted iron. Her deck was like a slaughter-house. Many of the survivors were quite deaf, as the result of the continuous and violent concussion. When the *Varyag* got back into port, she signalled to the foreign warships asking for boats to take off the wounded, and every one sent boats with doctors and hospital appliances. The *Vicksburg's* Captain offered the Russians the use of a transport which had arrived with United States navy supplies, but the Russians all went on board the *Talbot*, *Elba*, and *Pascal*, where they were treated 'like brothers,' as they said in profound gratitude. They deserved all the sympathy anyone could give, and they got it.

Though the *Koreyetz* was by no means so badly battered as the bigger ship, it was decided to blow her up, so that she should not fall into the enemy's hands. Her crew went on board the *Pascal*, and so did the crew of a Russian merchant ship, the *Sungari*, which had arrived in Chemulpo the previous day. It was curious to note the elaborate reverence shown by the Russians in removing the official portrait of the Tsar from the warships; it was so much like the habit of

the Japanese and Chinese to treat the ruler's picture as a deity in itself.

At four o'clock, as the last boat hurried away from the *Koreyetz*, a terrific explosion took place in the after part of the gunboat, and another in the fore-part almost at the same moment. Two gigantic columns of dense black smoke and fragments of débris rose into the sky, writhing and rolling outward several hundred feet high. The lurid rays of the nearly setting sun were blotted out for a minute or two, and then shone only through a sombre veil, while thousands of charred and burning fragments of the wreck rained down from the dark cloud into the water. At that awe-inspiring moment the band of the *Elba* pealed forth the Russian national hymn, solemn and beautiful above all, and sailors of all nations present, with hearts full of sympathy, joined their voices with those of the Russians.

The *Varyag* was well on fire by this time, but heeling over more and more, and, though small explosions were heard from time to time, there was no repetition of the spectacle just witnessed. She finally plunged over to port and sank at six o'clock, with a great expiring roar as the water rushed in over the fire. Russian and French officers then put off in the *Pascal's* boat and set fire to the *Sungari*, which burned all night, and sank towards morning.

The position of the Russians on board the foreign warships was not well understood at first. The Japanese gave notice that the laws of war in such a case would require that the survivors should be prisoners, having been defeated in battle. There was some discussion, the Russians and French protesting indignantly; but it is on record that in the American

THE *VARYAG* ON HER SIDE, ONLY VISIBLE AT LOW TIDE.

A JAPANESE FLAG ON BAMBOO POLE IS STUCK IN THE MUZZLE OF A GUN.

THE *KORYETZ* AND *SUNGARI* SUNK AT CHEMULPO.

ALONGSIDE THE *KORYETZ* IS HER STEAM TENDER, CAPSIZED, ALSO A JAPANESE MAN-OF-WAR'S BOAT.

Civil War the British ship *Greyhound* gave refuge to the crew of a Confederate ship sunk in battle, and the act was held illegal. So in this case the Russians were made to give a pledge that they would not again take part in the war, and on this condition they were allowed to go free. Some of the wounded were treated in the Japanese hospital at Chemulpo, as it was not easy to have so many on shipboard; and these were afterwards taken to Japan, but on recovering from their wounds they were released and allowed to return to Russia on parole, like the others.

CHAPTER VIII

A ONE-SIDED WEEK'S WORK

After their exploits of the 8th and 9th, the two sections of the Japanese fleet under Admiral Togo reassembled at Elliott Island, and a considerable portion of the squadron returned to Sasebo, leaving a small detachment to keep watch in the Liaotung region. The chief thing was that all the Russian ships had been located. On the night of the 8th some Japanese destroyers looked into Dalny, where some Russian ships were believed to be, but the place was empty. And counting the vessels known to be at Shanghai, Newchwang, Vladivostok, Port Arthur, and Chemulpo, the whole Russian fleet was accounted for beyond doubt.

The total fighting strength of Russia in the Far East (omitting small craft) consisted of the *Petropaulovsk*, *Poltava*, and *Sevastopol*, sister ships, 10,950 tons, 17 knots, and each carrying guns to fire a broadside of 3,360 lbs.; *Peresviet* and *Pobieda*, 12,670 tons, 19 knots, 2,670 lbs. broadside; *Retvizan*, 12,700 tons, and *Tsarevitch*, 13,100 tons, both 18 knots and firing 3,500 lbs. at a broadside. These seven formed the backbone of Russia's naval power in the Far East. These were all battleships, and compared poorly with the six of Japan, being less heavily protected, their guns of

less aggregate power, their speeds different and doubtful.

In armoured cruisers, again, Russia was inferior: she had of this class at Port Arthur only the *Bayan*, a ship far below the Japanese standard in this class, for her tonnage was 7,800, speed 22 knots, and total broadside fire only 952 lbs. In Vladivostok there were the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia*, of about 12,000 tons, 20 knots, and 1,200 or 1,300 lbs. broadside; *Rurik*, 10,900 tons, 18 knots, 1,300 lbs. broadside; and *Bogatyr*, 6,750 tons, 23 knots, but only 872 lbs. broadside.

In the unarmoured cruiser class the Russians had the sister ships *Diana* and *Pallada*, 6,630 tons, 20 knots, 632 lbs. broadside; *Askold* and *Varyag*, 6,500 tons, 23 knots, 772 lbs. and 510 lbs. broadside respectively, and the little *Boyarin* and *Novik*, 3,000 tons, 180 lbs. broadside, and 22 and 25 knots respectively. Besides these, Russia had a large number of powerful torpedo-destroyers, some of the fastest in the world.

As an illustration of the magnitude of Russia's bid for the naval supremacy of the Pacific, it may be noted that the seven battleships cannot have cost less than £10,000,000 sterling in all; the eleven best cruisers £9,000,000; and all the others, small cruisers, gunboats, mine-layers, and torpedo craft, about £10,000,000 more, at a low estimate. This makes close on £30,000,000 sterling for the total of sixty-eight effective fighting ships of the navy in the Far East, without counting the Volunteer Fleet of protected cruisers, and the steamers of the so-called Chinese Eastern Railway Company, really a Russian Government concern. Thus, in actual money afloat in Asiatic waters, without taking account of

docks, arsenals, etc., Russia had about £50,000,000 sterling at stake.

Now, in the first half-week of the war, the Japanese had sunk, captured, or temporarily disabled the following :

Tsarevitch and *Retvizan*, torpedoed, able to fire their guns as long as they stayed aground in shoal-water, but needing repairs which would take months before they could go into action.

Pallada, similarly disabled, requiring several weeks in dock.

Sevastopol and *Petropaulovsk*, damaged below waterline, quite out of action for the time, but not so long as the others.

Askold and *Novik*, very much damaged and their efficiency reduced.

Yenisei, blown up by her own mines ; *Boyarin*, driven on the rocks in a gale and destroyed, when carrying on the *Yenisei's* work.

Koreyetz and *Varyag*, totally destroyed at Chemulpo ; *Sungari*, burnt and sunk.

Manchuria, steamer, valued (for insurance) at £85,000, captured near Port Arthur, with valuable cargo, including munitions of war.

Rossia, steamer, value £35,000, captured on the way to Port Arthur.

Moukden, seized at Fusan ; *Argun*, seized near Mokpo, total value £60,000.

Ekaterinoslav, Volunteer Fleet cruiser, twin screw, 18 knots, captured off Korean coast, valued at £70,000.

Shilka and *Amur*, merchant steamers, value £30,000 each, taken at sea.

Bureia, *Zeia*, *Nagadan*, and *Nonni*, sunk by Russians in Dalny ; about the same class as *Shilka*.

Steam whalers *Kotik*, *Bobrik*, *Nikolai*, *Michael*, *Alexander*, and coasting traders *Juriady* and *Viestnik* (sailing ships), mostly found in Japanese waters ; total value about £100,000.

The Chinese Eastern Railway Company was especially hard hit. Before the war began, the company had seventeen steamships, nearly all new within the last two or three years—namely, since Russia got the last railway agreement with China. This fleet was a part of the scheme of dominating Manchuria. Now five at least were destroyed, and five taken as prizes of war, carrying contraband. They would all be totally lost to the Company.

In addition to the Russian ships captured, about a dozen foreign steamers chartered to carry coal from Japan and China ports to Port Arthur on the eve of the outbreak were seized, some in Japanese ports and some at sea, for each one had been carefully kept under observation up to the moment of the rupture. Prize courts were established promptly in Japan, and the cargoes of these vessels were held to be confiscated.

Besides these material losses Russia at a single blow lost her hold on Korea entirely. The swiftness and ease with which every vestige of Russian power was wiped out in Chemulpo, and the immediate effect on Seoul, impressed the Koreans more than years of manœuvring could have done. After hearing for years about the enormous power of Russia and the insignificance of Japan, to see the Russian ships blotted out and Japanese troops calmly establishing themselves

in occupation of Seoul, the Russian Legation and the consulate at Chemulpo politely escorted out of the country, threw the Koreans into a panic, and all who had been the abject slaves of M. Pavloff now hastened to profess their intense friendship to Mr. Hagiwara. In three days the whole country knew of the change, and was ready to throw itself at the feet of the conqueror, forgetting its traditional hate and contempt of the Japanese and its fear of the Russians, and hailing with enthusiasm the 'saviours of the country.'

The friendship of the Koreans is not much to rely on, but at least it had a considerable value from the point of view of convenience in campaigning. An abundance of cheap coolie labour, for the manifold needs of an army on the march or in camp; a supply of pack-ponies and a fine supply of oxen, both for food and for draught purposes; great quantities of rice and other grain; unlimited stocks of firewood ready to hand (an important thing for troops in the field in the dead of winter); and many other things were lost and won at the first blow struck in Korea.

The Japanese were, of course, not to inflict so much loss on Russia and suffer nothing at all in return. The injuries to their warships were officially stated to be of no great importance, and while official statements are always liable to be influenced by considerations of policy, the visible facts have shown that these official reports were correct so far as they concerned Japanese ships, and only erred in some of their details as to the damage supposed to have been done to the Russians. Such errors are always likely to occur, even where there is the most conscientious desire for absolute accuracy; for when ships are fighting at a distance that makes

them all but invisible, or in darkness that makes them even more so, and when an incessant banging and bursting goes on on both sides, any man's idea of the effects on his opponents must be taken as uncertain. Thus it happened that both the Japanese and the Russians often erred in their reports of damage to the enemy, and the errors are intelligible. But one's own losses can be known with certainty, and there is no great advantage ultimately in trying to disguise them; and both Japanese and Russian statements of their own injuries were, after all, pretty accurate. It would not have benefited Viceroy Alexieff to report his battleships all in good order when they were, in stern fact, not doing their work. The work itself must tell. And it was equally obvious that Admiral Togo had nothing to gain by saying that his fleet was practically unhurt and able to keep at sea ready for a fight at any time if he had, in fact, lost ships, as believed by the Russians. The practical result was bound to be proof enough one way or the other.

Returning to Sasebo, two days' steam from Port Arthur, Admiral Togo sent ashore the dead and wounded, and quickly effected the repairs needed. In Japan there are over a dozen good dry docks—at Yokohama, Yokosuka, Uraga, Kobe, Kure, Nagasaki, and Sasebo—while Russia has only one at Port Arthur and one at Vladivostok. But in this case Sasebo was able to do all that was needed, and the fleet was at sea again by February 14, having had two days in harbour. But the battleship *Fuji*, which had been hurt more than any other, was left in dock. She had two officers killed and ten men wounded, and a good deal of damage done to her upper works. The flagship

Mikasa was specially singled out by the Russian gunners, as she headed the line of attack, and she was hit several times, but her armour was never pierced, and only a little damage was done on the upper deck. The Russian shells did not explode on the deck, as a rule, and one which did so was broken into few pieces, not scattering much. The cruiser *Iwate*, which brought up the rear of the line of battle, was also a special mark, as she got the entire attention of the Russian artillerymen after they had tried their aim on the rest of the line. One 12-inch shell hit the casemate of a big gun, and the flying pieces wounded several men, including an officer, but the gun and ship were practically uninjured. The *Yakumo* was hit by one big shell, but was not much damaged. The battleship *Hatsuse* had two shells in her side, above the armour, aft, and one on the upper deck, but neither of them did serious damage. The *Chitose* also was struck and slightly injured.

These facts show, first, fewer hits by far than the Japanese gunners made on the Russian ships; secondly, that the Russian shells did not come with very great force, comparatively speaking; and thirdly, that their bursting charge and destructive capacity could not compare at all with that of the Japanese. No Japanese ship was penetrated on or below the water-line, like the *Askold*, *Novik*, *Poltava*, *Diana*, *Sevastopol*, and *Petropaulovsk;* such injuries to ships in their own harbour, meant only temporary disablement, but to ships 600 miles away from home would have been serious, if not fatal. None of the Russian shells which hit the Japanese did anything like the damage which the Japanese did to the *Varyag*, and this can

only mean that in a fight between equal ships, with equally good guns and gunners, the one type of shell would win the day against the other.

While the Japanese were getting so many valuable prizes, the Russians did what they could to destroy Japanese commerce, but took no prizes. In the north, the Vladivostok squadron was not frozen in, as some reports had stated. It did not make any attempt to descend on the coast of Japan and bombard the ports, as many people expected, but contented itself with sinking small vessels of no importance from a belligerent point of view. Japan had a far larger merchant marine than Russia, and could have been injured in that direction ten times as much as she could injure; but the Vladivostok and Port Arthur squadrons seemed to be afraid of venturing much abroad. The fastest of the Russian cruisers, built especially as 'commerce destroyers,' had been expected to dash out, each one on a raid by itself, so separating as to make it impossible for the Japanese to keep track of them all or hunt them down; and if the greyhounds of the fleet had been thus engaged, the heavier ships could have stayed to guard Port Arthur and occasionally make a descent on the Korean or Japanese coast. Such tactics would have done very real damage to Japanese shipping, and would have put an early stop to the voyages of hundreds of foreign steamers trading to Japan, many with munitions of war, and all of them helping indirectly to keep up the nation's strength. The *Novik* was built for a speed of 25 knots, and was quite new; if she made anything like that, she could not be caught by anything in the Japanese navy (except destroyers, and those she could

sink with her 5-inch guns before they could get near her) ; and she could make an easy prey of any merchant ship in the world. The only thing such cruisers are ever built for is to race about the open ocean by themselves, and she ought to be able to get coal from her prizes if no other supply was obtainable. At any rate, vessels of the greyhound type are worse than useless inside a harbour that is being bombarded. So it was generally expected that the swiftest of the Port Arthur squadron would slip out some foggy night (there were many) and fly off on solitary errands of destruction.

What they did was the very opposite. None of the Port Arthur ships ever showed any disposition to attempt individual action of this sort ; the whole fleet ventured out occasionally a few miles from Port Arthur, and returned. At the stage of operations now under consideration, not one Japanese merchant vessel had been captured or sunk. That is up to February 11. Yet Viceroy Alexieff had his fighting orders on the 4th, and the Port Arthur squadron on the night of the 8th was expecting to sail in a few hours. As against the long list of Russian losses on the 7th, 8th, and 9th, there was no Russian success to record until the 11th, and then it was such a poor little thing as to excite only derision.

There were two small trading steamers, the *Nagoura* and *Zensho*, 700 and 170 tons respectively, toiling along the west coast of Japan from one small town to another with general cargoes and passengers. They had heard nothing of war having begun, and were surprised to find four huge warships bearing down on them in the Tsugaru Strait, between the main island

of Japan and the northern island, Hokkaido (the ancient Yezo). There was a little snow in the air, and some mist hung on the water; the wind was sharp, easterly, and the two little steamers were not having a pleasant trip. The smaller vessel kept closer inshore as they plunged along on parallel courses. Suddenly a blank shot was fired by one of the big warships, and a signal was hoisted in the international flag-signal code, meaning, 'We do not allow you to go on; you must come with us.' While the captain of the *Nagoura*, amid excited inquiries from his passengers, was directing the answering flags to be hoisted and the ship's course to be changed, another string of flags was run up to the warship's masthead. 'Everybody leave the ship within fifteen minutes.' Fortunately it was near mid-day. The *Nagoura* replied, 'Boats insufficient; send help.' Both the Russian and the *Nagoura* proceeded to lower boats, but before the people had time to get off the ship shells were fired into her, tearing holes in her side in half a dozen places.

Two of the crew fell, struck by pieces of shell, and were carried away by the sea. The Japanese, therefore, had to hurry all the more, and could not save any provisions or personal property at all, for the Russians went on shooting till the ship was riddled and sinking rapidly. The boats had to pull towards the firing, which came unpleasantly close overhead, and as the waves lifted the little boats it seemed a miracle that they did not get in the way of a shell. The refugees were taken aboard the *Gromoboi*, and their clothes and pockets searched, every article of value being taken from them. The warship was meantime resuming her

course in pursuit of the poor little *Zensho*, and the *Nagoura* was seen to sink in about half an hour.

On board the *Zensho* all was wild excitement: the fireman (there is only one in most of these little boats, for they are no bigger than tugs) was rattling coal into his furnace as he never had done before, for everything depended on getting as much speed as possible, and the captain was steering inshore closer to rocks and reefs and sandbanks than he would ever have dared to do; but he was expecting his little craft to be sunk any minute, and the nearer land the better. As luck would have it, the weather, which had been dull and at times a little thick, suddenly turned much worse, a heavy rain-squall came on, and it was impossible to see a hundred yards through the driving storm. Never was storm so delightful! 'Heave cargo overboard, for your lives!' One by one, bags of rice and bales of smelly salt fish were hauled up from the grimy little hold and flung over the side, as a gruesome sort of propitiation to the gods of the sea and of war—or, in modern parlance, as a means of helping the engines to another half-knot and lessening the boat's draught a few inches, so as to get over sandbanks a shade better. Then she headed yet closer inshore, in places marked unfit for navigation on the charts, but every turn of the clanking crank-shaft and every roll of a wave pushed the poor scurrying *Zensho* further out of reach of the might and majesty of all the Russias, as represented by the 12,000-ton *Gromoboi*, 12,000-ton *Rossia*, 11,000-ton *Rurik*, and 6,000-ton *Bogatyr*, with their 18, 20, and 23 knots and all their terrible cannon.

And the god of storms, who so often saved the Japanese from their mainland foes, saved the *Zensho*

in the end. As she was disappearing from the view of the Russians they fired some shots after her, but they dared not risk going near the shallow waters where she was, and the rain shut out everything about 3 p.m., after a hide-and-seek chase of over four hours.

And for a long time this remained the sole achievement of the Russian navy.

CHAPTER IX

A DARING RAID

Having dealt a severe blow at Port Arthur, Admiral Togo devoted his whole energy to the task of following up the advantage and making permanent the command of the sea thus temporarily secured. For though the Russians had so many vessels disabled, it was certain that some sort of repairs would be effected, and the ships might yet be able to do much damage. Moreover, the Russian destroyers and torpedo-boats had not yet displayed their powers; on paper they were a very formidable force, including some of the swiftest vessels in the world, and they could not be allowed to remain afloat if it could be prevented. So the main force of the Japanese navy was kept constantly within easy reach of Port Arthur, while the smallest possible sections were detached to guard the channels where the Vladivostok fleet might try to get out. Admiral Kamimura, with a cruiser squadron and torpedo flotilla, was stationed in the vicinity of Tsushima to keep watch, and on no account to let a Russian warship get through. Smaller detachments kept a look-out in the Tsugaru Channel, between Hokkaido and the main island of Japan, and there were also look-out boats in the Soya Strait, between Hokkaido and the Russian island of Saghalien. No fighting force could be

spared to guard all these points, but it was enough to keep watch, and send promptly for other ships to come if the Russians should pass through any of the channels. If they did not, they were confined to the landlocked Sea of Japan, with little chance to do any harm.

Another small force had to be told off for duty near Shanghai for several weeks, as the Russian gunboat *Manjour* remained there, finding excuses for not disarming, and it was necessary to be ready for her if she should come out and try to prey on shipping. With these exceptions, the whole force of the Japanese navy was concentrated near Port Arthur.

But it was not Admiral Togo's intention to line up ship against ship, and fight till both sides were nearly annihilated. His policy from first to last was to take good care of his ships, and fight as much as possible at the longest range, so that the superior practice of his men and the superior efficiency of his guns and ammunition should make all the difference. For instance, if he could make a few hits at 9,000 yards against the enemy's nothing, that was far better than if he had come near, hit the Russians doubtless a good deal more, but suffered something important in return. The position was not unlike that of Santiago de Cuba in the Spanish-American War. The forts were so powerful that it would be highly inadvisable to come within their effective range, and the ships had to lie some seven miles away and by carefully calculated high-angle fire let their shells drop, as it were, from the sky into the town and forts, dockyard and harbour. To this the enemy, be he the most efficient in the world, can make but little reply, because a ship on the water at such a distance can only be hit very

rarely, if at all. In the long-run, such a fight must result in a victory for the ships against the forts. The only way to save the forts would be by having an equally efficient fleet to make a counter-attack. But if the defending fleet is afraid to attack, or is not strong enough, and keeps close under the shelter of the forts, it makes itself liable to be blocked in. That is what happened at Santiago and at Port Arthur. In both cases the blocking was very incomplete, but so far as it went it had considerable effect ; it bothered the defenders very greatly, and helped to place them at a particular disadvantage when they did at last decide to come out.

The Russian fleet had at first occupied a position in the open roadstead which forms the outer anchorage of Port Arthur. The reason for staying there was that the Russians are not at all skilful in moving big ships in and out of narrow channels. All over the Far East coast pilots and merchant skippers have noted this for years. Therefore it was found, as a rule, more convenient to use the outer anchorage all the time. That explains how it happened that the Japanese were able to inflict their first blow so easily. Then, for a day or two the entrance was partly blocked by the stranded *Retvizan*, *Tsarevitch*, and *Pallada*, and by the tug-boats, lighters, tow-lines, etc., required to get the huge vessels afloat and to drag them inside the harbour. These obstructions did not at any time completely close the channel, but they so much increased the difficulty of navigation that the Russians did not attempt to move any large vessel through until the disabled ones had been moved. After that they all went in, and seldom used the outer anchorage again.

This was a practical confession that the command of the seas must remain with Japan. It implied that, even with the backing of the forts, the Russian squadron could not hold its own at long range, and could not make any proper defence against night attacks by torpedo craft. On several occasions the Russian destroyers encountered the Japanese destroyers and sustained defeat. Though numerically the Russians ought to have had the superiority, it usually happened that the Japanese would contrive to outmanœuvre their opponents, and isolate one boat, surround it, and overpower it. This was simply superior seamanship and pluck. There is no pretence that the Russian torpedo flotilla ever made any effort seriously to find the Japanese naval base of operations and make a night attack, as the Japanese were continually doing at Port Arthur. They could have done something in this line, for on February 10 Admiral Alexieff telegraphed to St. Petersburg that the squadron had steamed out of Port Arthur and cruised in the open sea for a time, finding 'no sign of the Japanese anywhere.' That the ships simply went into their corner again, instead of making some attempt to keep the sea and do some damage to the enemy, shows how little practical faith they had in their own official reports of the damage supposed to have been done to the Japanese ships. At that date no Japanese ships had been claimed to have been sunk by the Russians, but the official version of the fight on the 8th was that the Japanese were repulsed—that is to say, that they had the worst of the encounter. In the next few days the injured Russian ships, except the three which were torpedoed, were reported to be again fit for service,

while several Japanese ships were stated in Russian official despatches to have been disabled. Still, there was no attempt on the part of the Russians to gain command of the sea or in any way to molest the Japanese so long as they were not attacking.

On the night of February 13 Admiral Togo detailed four destroyers to make a dash into Port Arthur. It was about the time of new moon, and so the night was dark enough, and there was a snowstorm, which is worse than fog for shutting out everything from view. The four boats were those which had been sent to Dalny on the night of the 8th, and had found no Russians there; this expedition to Port Arthur, therefore, served to keep them level with the other boats in working experience. The snowstorm thickened so much that the boats got separated, and two of them could not find the way into Port Arthur at all. They therefore had to make for the Elliott Islands and rejoin the fleet. The other two, though they had quite lost each other, persevered in the attempt to find Port Arthur, in spite of the order to keep together or return.

Towards 3 a.m. of the 14th the destroyer *Asagiri* found that the storm was lifting a little, and she was able to make out enough of the shore-line to know where she was. Creeping along, she soon reached the outer anchorage of Port Arthur, and was found by the Russian searchlights, now kept going incessantly. Then came a display of Japanese pluck. Entirely alone, with the streaming light full on her, and with the knowledge that streams of projectiles would follow as soon as the gunners could get their pieces trained on her, this little craft kept straight on, determined to

fly in the face of all the firing, and take her chance of being hit. She would have to run the gauntlet for several minutes, and as no other Japanese vessel was about, she would have the whole attention of Port Arthur concentrated on her. Yet she kept on, and never turned till she was near enough to fire her torpedo at a big ship in the harbour. The crew of the *Asagiri* felt sure they saw the torpedo hit the mark and explode, but the Russians deny that anything was torpedoed that night. Remembering that the *Asagiri* people had the glare of vivid searchlights staring them straight in the eyes, it is quite possible that the mistake was theirs; anyone who has ever tried to steer a boat, not to speak of aiming a torpedo and watching its effect, with a dazzling, blinding electric light right in front, will appreciate the difficulty. It was a splendid performance even to take a destroyer into an enemy's harbour against such odds, fire a torpedo, and get away unhurt, pursued by a storm of shot and shell from over a hundred guns. The *Asagiri* then headed back towards the rendezvous of the fleet.

Meanwhile the *Hayatori* was repeating the performance. This boat had not been as lucky in making out the land and recognising the position as her consort, but she, too, refused to turn back home without accomplishing anything, and at last she found the enemy, about 5 a.m. She knew nothing of what the other boats had done—whether they had kept together and delivered their attack or not; and her officers and crew were feeling angry at their own ill-luck in being so long wandering about. The sound of guns had been heard, and it helped to indicate the course to the wanderer, besides adding to the vexation

of her men at having missed something. At last, groping her way in the thick weather, she got near enough to see the Russian searchlights sweeping the sea, and at once she got her bearings, and dashed into the zone of light. The Russians had hardly expected this sort of chance visit from isolated destroyers, but it is an exceedingly difficult thing to hit a tiny target speeding at thirty knots on a dark night, and even the most practised eye cannot overcome the strangeness and tricky effects of searchlights. Guns were fired as quickly as possible, on the theory that even a wild shot may hit, so long as something is there to be hit, but the most careful aim in the world cannot hit a target that has gone. And that is how the Russians lose so many chances—by their slowness.

CHAPTER X

BLOCKING PORT ARTHUR

For many reasons, it was not enough that Admiral Togo should keep his entire fleet simply waiting outside Port Arthur for an indefinite length of time. Every day that passed would mean so much more work done in the repairing of the three big torpedoed ships, and, given time enough, there was no reason why they should not some day be in full fighting strength again. Every day, too, increased the chance of the Russians sending naval reinforcements from the Baltic squadron; it was a very remote chance at first, but it had to be kept in mind, and it might grow into a dangerous possibility. Every day at sea means that a ship's bottom is gradually getting encrusted with barnacles and seaweed, and her speed is lessened; a month in the water without a chance to dock and scrape means a knot or two less speed. Moreover, each day that the Japanese ships cruised up and down before Port Arthur meant so much depletion of coal in bunkers and shell in magazines, and it would not do to be only half-stocked at a critical moment; the ships had to retire one by one to replenish in a sheltered place. And furious northerly gales sometimes stir up the seas in these regions, making it quite impossible for a large fleet to keep in communication. If ships get

too near in rough and thick weather they are liable to collide, and in avoiding collisions they lose sight of each other in a storm. And these storms ought to be additionally dangerous if the enemy is enterprising, for when the look-out man cannot see a hundred yards from the ship, then is the time to make torpedo raids. So it was decidedly necessary to do something more than simply wait for the Russians to come out and fight.

Admiral Togo had five steamers loaded with stone ballast ready to sink at the mouth of Port Arthur harbour, and he issued a notice asking for men to volunteer for the dangerous duty. He stated the conditions plainly. The steamers were to go right into the jaws of death, settle there amid the enemy's fire, and the crews were to take their chance of getting away in boats and being picked up by the Japanese torpedo flotilla, or of perishing by being drowned or blown to pieces. For such duty no man would be ordered to step forward, but seventy men were wanted, fourteen each for five ships, and any who wished to volunteer should send in their names through their own officers.

Over 2,000 men sent in their names. Many adopted the old Samurai usage in desperate undertakings, and wrote their letters in their own blood. The Japanese, when in the fighting mood, enjoy dare-devil exploits as much as anyone in the world, and the only difficulty is to restrain men from flinging away their lives needlessly or unprofitably in sheer scorn of danger and death.

The requisite number having been selected, by taking from each warship only the most careful and

experienced of the volunteers, Admiral Togo then had the task of dealing with respectful petitions from many disappointed officers and men, hoping to be employed in the torpedo vessels accompanying the steamers and rescuing the crews. Many of the best officers in the navy were only too eager to be allowed on some such errand.

The expedition was originally planned for February 20, but had to be postponed as the weather was too rough, and the chance of getting the steamers planted in position with any accuracy was too small. It was work that could not be done in the daytime, for the Russians could have sunk all the steamers by shell-fire three or four miles out, and nothing would have been gained. The principal danger was in this possibility. In fact, some of the Japanese officers suggested that it might prove impossible to keep the steamers afloat long enough to plant them at the desired place even at night, and that it would be necessary to get vessels specially prepared, such as lighters covered with thick armour-plates, which could not be sunk prematurely. But lighters could only be moved slowly, in tow of something ; therefore the only way practicable was to use steamers moving by their own power, and there was no time or opportunity to armour them. They must just try as they were, and if it failed, it failed. At the worst, there would be a few old vessels thrown away ; and even then, even if they did not manage to reach the centre of the narrow entrance, they would be an encumbrance and a danger to the Russian fleet in moving about every time it ventured forth.

It is still open to discussion, in view of what happened, whether the next naval war will not produce

something in the way of a specially-fitted blocking-hulk—something with a very large number of water-tight compartments, of some design not requiring a long time to construct. Perhaps it would be possible to devise something less disappointing than these ships proved. With all Japan's dockyards so near, it seemed a pity to send only vessels which could be prevented from getting to their destination, and which, even after being placed in position, could be destroyed by the Russians, so as to leave the channel fairly clear after all. One would think that, even at short notice, Japanese ingenuity would be capable of improving in some way on the crude device of merely running ordinary steamers as near as they could get and sinking them promiscuously.

The steamers selected were the *Jinsen* and *Tenshin*, of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha (Japan Mail Steamship Company); *Buyo* and *Bushu*, of the Nippon Shosen Kaisha (Japan Commercial Steamship Company); and the *Hokoku*, belonging to Kawamura and Co. They were all between 1,000 and 2,000 tons. They were sent on their way on Tuesday night, February 23, after a couple of cruisers had reconnoitred in front of Port Arthur and brought the report that there was no sign of anything doing there. The steamers were escorted by five torpedo-boats, which went in front as scouts until near Port Arthur, and then waited at a safe distance. There were four Russian searchlights at work, and the crews of the steamers nerved themselves for a rush straight into the jaws of death.

Oh, how slowly an old ten-knot tramp-ship can crawl! At half-past three in the morning the queer little squadron came into the view of the Russians, and

in a few minutes the shells began coming. Over three miles to go yet, and that would take over a quarter of an hour. Could it be done? Could these poor doomed coffin-ships carry on so far? There was but a skeleton crew on board, each man going about his work with lifebelt about his body, and his thoughts centring on the novelty of this modern method of hara-kiri. To sit solemnly on a mat in one's ancestral home, surrounded by calmly approving relatives; to take a dignified farewell, and then with keen blade cut one's abdomen open in correct style—this was more picturesque, more Japanese, than to be ploughing through the black sea on a freezing night, inviting annihilation from the Russian batteries—inviting the hail of violent explosives now beginning to fall, to disembowel an empty steamer instead of a man.

The engines of the ships bumped along steadily, as if they were on their accustomed round of hunting up cargoes from port to port. How long would it be before a crash would send the engines to smithereens, and engineer and firemen too? When a ship is blown up, it is a long way from the depths of the stokehold to escape to the upper deck; and what escape would that be now? Escape into the open, where shot and shell were already whistling through the darkness; escape into the little dinghy that was hanging out on the davits in readiness, perhaps already shattered and unfloatable; escape into the icy water, where angry, disappointed bullets and big projectiles were plunging and hissing in all directions; escape by rowing out over the rough, tossing sea, out through the zone of fire and the pitiless glare of light, out two or three miles, perhaps five or six, away from land out into the

stormy ocean, to swamp and drown, or to be at the mercy of wind and waves until the torpedo-boats could find out where the survivors had drifted.

The *Hokoku* managed to keep straight on towards the harbour mouth, her steering unaffected by the fire of the Russians, her engines unhurt, and it was not until she was close to the entrance that she sank. Her own crew did not sink her ; they kept right on till the concentrated fire of the forts riddled her through and through, and she sank in shallow water. She was not far from the battleship *Retvizan*, which had not yet been got inside the harbour, and had been firing all its guns. The wonder is that only three of her crew, including one officer, were wounded by flying bits of shell. The dinghy was lowered ; there was no need to ignite the fuse and blow up the old *Hokoku*, since she was already settling down. The ropes holding the anchors were quickly cut, and down went the two anchors, one at the bow and one astern, to prevent the wreck from drifting into a useless position. Then all hands jumped into the little boat and rowed away, the wildest, maddest boat-race ever known. The boat was not built to carry more than eight men, and with fourteen she was nearly submerged, even in smooth water close to shore. There was hardly room for the men to row, so crowded was she ; and while four rowed, the rest had to keep baling, and the three wounded men had to bear the pain and wait. So they managed at last to pull the boat out of the zone of fire, and a torpedo-boat was encountered five miles off shore.

The *Jinsen* had followed the *Hokoku* and got nearly as far, but her steering gear was struck, and it was

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PORT ARTHUR, SHOWING VESSELS SUNK IN ENTRANCE.

with difficulty that her scanty crew managed to keep her on any course at all. She eventually sank near the shore a quarter of a mile further from the entrance than the first ship. A boat was lowered, but a three-inch shell went through it and tore too large a hole for hasty plugging. Another boat was lowered, with the same result, and it was not till the third boat was tried that the crew got away. One of them was killed while on the steamer, and his body was put into the boat. This was the only death on the expedition, and the wounded only numbered three—those of the *Hokoku* just mentioned. The *Tenshin* went rather wide of the mark, and was blown up by her own people about a quarter of a mile from the harbour mouth, near the eastern shore. The *Buyo* also sank herself, nearer mid-channel, but some distance from the narrow part of it. The *Bushu* went down a little further out than the *Tenshin*. The crews were not all found by the torpedo-boats until near daylight, as it took so long for the small and heavily laden boats to row out.

The Russians had been utterly at a loss to understand what it all meant. Their first impression on sighting some vessels in the distance was that the Japanese warships were coming to make a night attack, for at first it was impossible to make out what sort of vessels these were, showing only end-on ; and in naval warfare one naturally expects any ship to be a warship. Soon the Russians began firing from the forts and the stranded *Retvizan*, and went on for some time without noticing that the Japanese were not firing back. Some of the Russians never noticed this at all, and supposed that it was an ordinary battle. That the ships headed right into the harbour mouth instead of

sailing past at a distance of several miles, as usual, did not seem strange ; it was just the sort of recklessness the Japanese often showed, for, indeed, if they had not been a reckless, suicidal sort of people they would never have gone to war with Russia in the first place. Thus it seemed quite in accordance with reasonable expectation that these rash warships should all be sunk. They must be all battleships, for of course no others would dare to charge straight into the entrance of an impregnable fortress.

But, as the ships were sinking close inshore, the Russians had all the searchlights on them, and made out that these did not look like battleships. And in the morning the whole mystery was explained. The masts of the sunken ships were visible above water, and as the tide went down parts of the hulls showed. The torpedo-boats had disappeared, and not a sign of the Japanese fleet was to be seen. The *Bayan* and *Novik*, with five destroyers, went out to reconnoitre. They heaved the lead with extra care as they went through the narrows, for the sight of the sunken wrecks suggested that perhaps others had sunk out of sight. Circling round, in widening radius, the Russian vessels saw nothing, and wondered if the Japanese were among the Miaotao islands, to the south, for there had been rumours that Japan was making unlawful use of Chefoo or Weihaiwei. So the Russians cruised in that direction a little ; and a Japanese destroyer, hiding behind one of the Miaotao islands, saw them without being seen, and made a wide détour to find and inform Admiral Togo. The result was that, about ten o'clock that morning, the Japanese fleet appeared in full force in front of Port Arthur.

The Russian vessels had only just time to get back; the Japanese opened fire, and the *Bayan*, *Novik*, and destroyers hurried into the inner anchorage. There was no use in staying to fight a duel of 'long bowls' with the forts alone; such a thing could be done with some effect if there was no alternative, but the Japanese had a better plan. Their ships were not to be used except against ships in the main, and the forts were to be dealt with in due course by the army of Japan, exactly as in 1894.

CHAPTER XI

WEARING OUT THE RUSSIAN FLEET

Since this blocking experiment had not been much of a success, it was necessary to maintain unwearying vigilance, and the Japanese torpedo flotilla cruised about on the night of the 24th in three divisions. One division went to have a look inside Talienwan, thirty or forty miles east of Port Arthur. Nothing was to be seen there, and after a thorough inspection the destroyers returned to the general rendezvous and reported. Another division paid a visit to Pigeon Bay, which is on the opposite side of Port Arthur, just 'round the corner.' There also nothing was to be seen. The third of the raids proved more productive of results: the boats made a dash at Port Arthur, and though they did not succeed in torpedoing anything, they raised an alarm among the Russians and drew an immense amount of firing from them, finally disappearing into the darkness as usual, all uninjured.

As the destroyers returned to Elliott Island about daylight, Admiral Togo got his big ships under way to resume the work of wearing out the Russians. Arriving off the port about nine o'clock, he found the *Bayan*, *Askold*, and *Novik* outside, and at once opened fire, both on them and on the ships in the inner harbour. Still keeping at extreme range, the attacking fleet

entirely avoided being hit, and dropped shell after shell right over the hills into the town and among the ships. Very slowly and carefully was each shell fired, for the chances of doing damage were small even at the best, and unless each gunner was extremely cautious it was all waste. One 12-inch shell dropped right on the deck of the *Askold* and damaged the mechanism of two guns, killing four men, wounding a dozen others, and for a time wrecking the deck of the ship. The *Bayan* also was hit, and though the shells did not do any structural damage, they exploded with such violence as to kill a number of the crew. Another shell struck the *Novik*, and the total Russian casualties that day included twenty-two killed and forty-one seriously wounded on the ships, besides three killed and eighteen wounded on land. After about half an hour's fighting, the three Russian cruisers took refuge inside the harbour, and the Japanese, after sending a few shots inside, withdrew.

During the battle two Russian destroyers were sighted a long way out, along the shore towards the extreme point of the peninsula. They were creeping towards Port Arthur, as if hoping to be unobserved until they could get under shelter of the forts. But two of the fastest Japanese cruisers were signalled to go after them, before they were near enough to get into shelter, and they turned and fled. One managed to make its full speed of thirty knots, or something near it, and, outdistancing the cruisers, disappeared on the horizon to the south-east. The other could barely manage twenty knots. Having but light guns, of course, she could not hope to fight a big cruiser, and she rounded the end of the peninsula and darted

into Pigeon Bay, on the northern side of it. The cruiser went in after her and sank her, the Russians steering as close inshore as she would go and landing in boats. Two or three more shells were put into her by the Japanese, just to make sure she would not be of service again.

And thus day by day the Japanese warships cruised before the port, as a rule firing only when they could get a shot at the Russian ships; and at night the Japanese destroyers had the task of keeping watch, and attacking when opportunity offered. Between them they thoroughly commanded the situation, preventing the Russian fleet from getting abroad to do any damage; and little by little the Japanese were managing to give more than they received. It was a tedious struggle after the first exciting days, and though it was satisfactory to assure Japan a free hand for other operations, for uninterrupted shipment of troops to the mainland, and uninterrupted commerce with the rest of the world, it was not enough to let matters rest as they stood. It was not enough to demoralize the Port Arthur squadron and land an occasional lucky shot into the forts. That would have won in the end, if there had been nothing else to think about, but there was always the shadowy menace of the Baltic squadron, which might become serious; there was always the repairing of the *Tsarevitch*, *Retvizan*, and *Pallada* going on, and they would probably be able to join in the fight to some extent in due course of time. There was the Vladivostok squadron, too, liable to elude all the vigilance of the Japanese by some freak of luck; and so it was necessary to try some other means of hastening the end of the Port Arthur fleet.

There were several other attempts to block the channel by sinking steamers, and some of the vessels towed, at the end of long ropes, submarine mines, made to explode on contact with any solid body, and having weights attached, so that as soon as the ropes were cut and the mines were left to themselves they would gradually sink, and the weights would act as anchors, holding the mines under the water. One steamer could thus take a string of four or six mines; as long as the steamers went at full speed, the mines and their anchors dragged behind, near or on the surface, but when dropped the mines averaged about 10 feet below the surface. Moreover, the Japanese torpedo-boats were kept continually laying mines in the regular way, further out, coming in the night and going as near as they thought safe, with the object of making a complete circle of mines which the Russian ships would be unable to pass. All these measures were partly successful; they bothered the Russians, and thus helped to wear them out.

But none of the schemes proved completely successful in shutting up the port. Time after time steamers were sacrificed, and men eagerly volunteered for the chance to sacrifice themselves; but after a while the Russians were able to get rid of the wrecks by a few blasting charges, put in during the day while the guns of the forts kept the Japanese ships from interfering with the operation. Time after time, too, the little torpedo-boats ran the gauntlet, sometimes trying to get into the channel unobserved when blocking-ships were being sent in, at other times taking advantage of dirty weather when nobody can see more than a few yards. Little by little, the keen Japanese

sailors got to know the way better, to be more familiar with the lie of the land, and to know their precise position by soundings when not a thing was visible. And as they became more confident, they lost one or two torpedo-boats by venturing too much in the line of fire, or scraping too near the rocks; and all the time more and more mines were being planted promiscuously all over the anchorage and the region around it. But if a mine is anchored in 30 feet of water at low tide, and has 20 feet of cable to hold it just 10 feet from the surface, then it will be 20 feet sunk at high tide; for tides often have 10 feet of rise and fall in this part of the world, and the extreme range at spring tides is about 15 feet. Then, if the mine was dropped at a place where the bed of the sea is a little uneven, it might easily happen that ships drawing 20 or even 24 feet might pass over unhurt.

Another element of uncertainty is in the weight of the anchor on the mine. If too heavy, it may sink in the mud so far as to make the mine harmless—that is to say, useless. On the other hand, if not heavy enough, the rise of the tide may lift the floating mine and loosen the anchor, making it drag away from its proper position. And, after all, it is a regular part of naval training to explode an enemy's mines. The Russians were not very skilful at this at first, but practice makes perfect, and as they kept at the work they grew so used to it that it was not worth Admiral Togo's while to go on laying mines. At high tide a vessel of light draught would go about everywhere with impunity, towing grappling-hooks or large drag-nets, and anything afloat below the surface was soon found. Anything that showed above water was fired into, and

if it was a mine it would either explode or sink to the bottom.

The fourth attack on Port Arthur resulted in a fierce fight between the Russian and Japanese torpedo-boat destroyers in the early morning of March 10, while it was still pitch-dark. Both fleets of big ships were away, and the encounter took place beyond the reach of the forts. This was the first time the Russian destroyers had made any serious display of activity, and the reason for their sudden energy was that Admiral Makaroff had now replaced Admiral Starck in chief command of the fleet. Admiral Makaroff left St. Petersburg a few days after the war began, as the disaster of the opening fight had been taken as a proof that Admiral Starck was not the man for the post. Admiral Makaroff was pre-eminently a man of action, and immediately on his arrival he inaugurated a much more vigorous policy than had prevailed. The Russian destroyers numbered fifteen altogether, but three of them were under repair. The other twelve were divided into two sections, and took turns at going on duty, night patrol chiefly. They were ordered to keep moving up and down in front of Port Arthur, not getting too far away, but hastening back to report immediately anything was seen of the Japanese, and if the Japanese destroyers should attempt to dash in, fight them. Up to this time it had been thought sufficient if two of the boats went out on patrol, the others waiting to be called if anything should happen ; but that only resulted in things happening before the alarm could be given, and so now the system was changed.

The Japanese soon adapted themselves to this

new phase, and on the night of March 9 they sent a destroyer flotilla in two sections, five boats each. to attempt a trick which proved very successful. Section A moved forward within sight of the harbour, and made as if to run in and attack, but on nearing the six Russian destroyers, swerved off to the left (south-west), and fired at the enemy as they passed. The six gave chase, and both flotillas drew away towards Laoteshan, the extreme point of the Liaotung Peninsula. Meantime the other Japanese (section B) crept up towards the harbour, in rear of the Russian destroyers, and laid a number of mines in position, about 4.30 a.m. The gunners in the forts at once opened fire, and the sound of the guns gave the alarm to the Russian destroyers, now about ten miles away.

At once they turned back, and all the Japanese tried to close in on them. But the Russians, by keeping as near shore as possible, had some protection as they fled, the forts making the Japanese keep further away from the land. Some of the Russians got clear away and entered the harbour, but others were not so lucky. Several of the boats got to close quarters, steaming all the time at their top speed, firing machine-guns and quick-firers as hard as they could go, the night being as black as ink and only the flash of the explosions serving to show the target. Which was friend and which was foe, one could hardly tell at times in the confusion. And as they sped, these frail thirty-knot destroyers, every shot that hit went through and through; even a rifle-bullet would pierce the thin shell, and shatter some delicate part of the complex mechanism on which all the speed depended.

And so it was with the Russian boat *Stereguchy*.

A Hotchkiss shell, 1-pounder, struck her steam-pipe, the main artery between boiler and engine, and caused an explosion. It was the beginning of the end for her. It killed one man, and scalded two others in the engine-room so badly that they were already dying when lifted out. The ship managed to keep on, using her other boilers, but, with the engines damaged and the best men gone, she could not keep her speed. Five of the Japanese closed in upon her, pouring in a concentrated fire of Maxim guns and pom-poms. The other Russians vanished in the direction of the approaching dawn (for by this time it was six o'clock) and four of them outran pursuit and got into harbour. One had been run on the rocks near Laoteshan, and the *Stereguchy* was surrounded. Desperately her men worked every gun they had, till man by man they fell, gasping and bleeding, yet in death's agonies struggling to place another clip of cartridges in the rifle, and with smoke-blinded eyes take another sight at the foe. But at last all except four of the Russians were either killed, crippled, or knocked overboard by the impact of bursting shells and flying wreckage of the vessel's upper works; and the Japanese destroyer *Sasanami* drew alongside, slowing down, and eager Japanese sailors sprang on board. The remaining Russians, only two unwounded, accepted the inevitable, and clambered from their blood-washed deck to the *Sasanami*, as prisoners, while the conquerors looked over their prize.

She was so torn and shattered, hull, decks, engines, everything, that she could not be taken away under her own steam, and it was doubtful if she could keep afloat long. However, the Japanese tried what could

be done, got a tow-line aboard, and started out to sea. It was now broad daylight, and the Russian cruisers *Bayan* and *Novik* slowly hove in sight. As they emerged from the harbour's mouth, heaving the lead and steaming dead slow through the dangerous part, they opened fire on the Japanese destroyers at about 4,000 yards' range. The *Sasanami* had not much time now to trouble about her capture; she could not afford to go half-speed, and as soon as she tried to go full speed the tow-rope broke with the bumping of the waves against the waterlogged *Stereguchy*. There was no use in trying again; each shell from the *Bayan* came nearer, and the Japanese went off at full speed.

As they disappeared Admiral Togo's battleships came in sight, to mount guard for the day over the blockaded port. Then it was the turn of the *Bayan* and *Novik* to retire, as even Admiral Makaroff, who was on the *Bayan*, must recognise the futility of trying to fight a pitched battle against such odds. Before getting back into harbour his ships were shelled at long range, and so were the forts. The Japanese continued firing at long intervals until about one o'clock. Some of the *Stereguchy's* crew had been knocked overboard, and others had jumped over when they saw that all was lost. The *Sasanami* tried to pick up these unfortunates, and failed on account of the Russian cruisers coming; the Russians, in their turn, were unable to wait and rescue them on account of the arrival of the Japanese in the distance. So the whole of them were drowned. In addition, Viceroy Alexieff's official report of the whole action shows three men killed and thirty-seven wounded, some ashore and some aboard the

destroyers, so that the Japanese shells must have been doing some damage.

The Japanese had not come through the fight unscathed. On the destroyer *Akatsuki* a boiler was hit by a shell and blew up, four firemen being scalded horribly and dying soon after. The *Sasanami* had an officer wounded and three men killed, and altogether the destroyer flotilla had about thirty casualties. But they were trifling compared with the Russian loss—two destroyers totally annihilated, and the flotilla still further demoralized. The *Stereguchy* was their very best boat, of the newest design, 32 knots, 350 tons displacement, 6,000 horse-power, carrying one 12-pounder gun, three 3-pounders, two machine-guns, and two torpedo-tubes. On paper she ought to have been more than a match for any Japanese destroyer.

On March 21 the Japanese destroyers againt went close in, and hung about the zone of fire all night, as if tempting the Russians to waste as much shot as possible. As none of the Russian ships were to be seen outside, there was no chance to do anything more than merely draw fire. The Russians throughout the first period of the Port Arthur fighting—that is to say, from February 8 until the time when their land communications were cut, about May 8—kept to the old-fashioned principle in shooting, the principle which underlies the idea of volley-firing, namely, that if a large number of shots can be fired all at once, some are bound to hit. It is an exploded theory in modern long-range warfare. It was all right in the old days of close quarters, but it is now recognised that a far better way is to aim slowly, carefully, and independently, taking time to be sure of each shot. Afterwards the

Russians also gradually came to realize this, to some extent, but the wisdom came too late to save them.

On the 22nd, as daylight came and drove away the destroyer squadron, the battleships took their place, sending in a leisurely shell or two by way of invitation to Admiral Makaroff to come out and fight. He brought out all his available force—five battleships (the two torpedoed ones still being under repair and quite useless) and five cruisers. He sailed them to and fro in front of the forts, but kept near them, and the Japanese declined to do more than fire from extreme range. That the Japanese could score a few hits was proved by Viceroy Alexieff's report of the day's work: 'Five of our soldiers at the forts were killed and nine wounded.' But though the Russian shells filled the water with splashes, they could not hit. After four hours of 'long bowls' the Japanese drew off, out of sight of the port, but near enough to see the Russian fleet if it made any move away from its base. And thus the rest of the day passed, and at night the destroyers as usual came on watch again.

Days and nights passed without a shot being fired, but everybody was kept on the alert. On the night of the 26th a second attempt was made to sink Japanese steamers in the entrance of the channel. The officers who made the first attempt had begged Admiral Togo to give them another chance, as they had not been successful, and they urged that their experience of the 10th would make them the more likely to do well this time. Accordingly, the same officers went, but the men were a new selection. This time it is said the applications sent in for permission to go and be killed were as many as 20,000, and there were some extra-

ordinary incidents in the competition. One man, of rank equivalent to what we call petty officer, found that his application was unsuccessful, and he tried to induce an ordinary seaman to exchange places with him. The seaman had been selected to go, but he could become petty officer, assume the other man's name, and pass for him in every way if he would. But he would not. Others in several cases desired to prove their superior fitness for the work by friendly wrestling matches with successful candidates. But discipline is extremely good in the Japanese navy, and all the rejected ones took the rejection stoically on finding there was no help for it.

The steamers were of the same type as before, but a little larger, ranging from about 2,000 to 3,000 tons. Most of them were about twenty years old. Their names were *Chiyo*, *Fukui*, *Yoneyama*, and *Yahiko*. The values would average about £10,000 each.

In the former expedition four out of five steamers had drifted to wrong positions before sinking, because the crews had to lower their boats and get into them before exploding the charges that were to sink the ships. In the few minutes of getting a boat down, and another minute or so while the fuse is spluttering, an empty ship, 'flying light,' is sure to drift, and no anchor can hold her exactly at once. This time the crews would be more careful about anchoring, and would have bigger charges to explode, so that the ships should sink more quickly and have less time to drift. It meant a trifle more danger, but on such an errand playing with death, laughing in the face of it, was part of the undertaking.

The moon was about the first quarter, and set about

midnight. The four steamers, with four torpedo-boats in front of them to see if the coast was clear, drew near the port in single file, going about ten knots. One searchlight was waving across the water, here, there, everywhere, and when the steamers were well within two miles they were seen. It was then just after three o'clock. A gun was fired from the signal station on Electric Hill, at the top of the headland on the eastern side of the channel. Instantly a dozen searchlights were turned on, and in another minute or so the flash and roar of big guns began all along the line of fortifications. The *Chiyo* was leading, and plunged on as well as her old engines could drive her. The fuses were set; two men with axes stood by the anchors to cut them loose; the engineers and stokers did the last bit of work they could and stood ready to slip up on deck; the steersman gripped the spokes of his wheel tighter than ever, for in the steering at the last minute lay all the difference between success and failure; and the officer in charge kept on, heeding not the storm of shot and shell, but watching some object on the water under the bow of his boat. In the glare he could not be sure, but it looked like a torpedo-boat coming towards him. It must be Russian; the others were far out at sea. The commander of the *Chiyo* had never expected to have such a chance; he might even succeed in ramming and sinking this Russian. It was an opportunity not to be missed. He swerved from his course, and though a torpedo the next minute burst a great hole in the side of the *Chiyo*, she had enough way on her to plunge forward a little further before sinking, and she managed to bump into the destroyer. It was her last effort, and had no effect, for

the Russian had seen the manœuvre in time and was already going astern, so the collision was slight. The *Chiyo's* anchor went down with a boisterous rattle of the chain, as if the broken old tramp was laughing hoarsely at the grim joke of it all.

But that swerve of the *Chiyo* misled the other steamships; their commanders had not seen the reason, and as their instructions had been to keep the same course as the *Chiyo*, and sink alongside of her, they did their best to follow. The *Fukui* came second, passed close on the starboard quarter of the leader, and Commander Hirose gave the order at once to drop anchor, lower the boat, and fire the sinking charge. This last operation was done by Lieutenant Sugino, a special friend of Hirose; and as the men were climbing down into the lifeboat, amid shot and shell, Hirose noticed that Sugino did not come. The charge had been fired; he must be hurt. At once Commander Hirose climbed back up the ship's side to look for his friend, and was struck full in the breast by a 3-inch shell as he reached the deck. The shell burst with a frightful effect, and the gallant Commander was literally blown to atoms. His men, despite the firing, returned to the sinking steamer to get his body, but all they could find was a mangled remnant of quivering flesh with some shreds of uniform hanging around it. It was impossible to go on looking for Sugino, as the ship went down in a few minutes, taking him with it, probably already killed by shell-fire.

The *Yahiko* was third, and passed close to the other two, stopping and sinking just beyond them. All her crew got away unhurt, though they and their ship were the target of many scores of guns, all trying their best

to aim straight by the uncertain light. But there was little use in trying to put shells into a sinking and abandoned hulk. Last came the *Yoneyama*, nearly ten minutes late, on account of her engines being poorer than the others. She passed them all, and went a little too far. She blundered right into the Russian destroyer, which was trying to get out of the way of so many ships all coming nearly together. The quick-firing guns on the warship were so near the sinking hulk that, though the shot flew past harmless, the flame from the muzzle scorched two of the Japanese sailors. She let go her anchor, but it did not hold immediately, and she dragged still further past her companions ; then a torpedo blew a huge hole in her side, just as the crew had ignited the fuse in her hold and slipped aboard their boat. Not a man was hurt.

The officer on the *Yoneyama's* bridge, Lieutenant Masaki, was hit by a piece of shell, which tore away his ear and part of his scalp, and Lieutenant Shimada, who went down into the hold to fire the sinking charge, was struck senseless and bleeding in the bottom of the ship. Masaki, again wounded by a big section of the shattered funnel falling on him and nearly wrenching off his shoulder, stuck to his post till everything was done, and then clambered down to find his comrade. Shimada had four great jagged wounds, in the neck, arm, and foot, and had to be lifted bodily up the ladder. By almost superhuman efforts Masaki got him up, without wasting precious time in going for help, and the two were the last to tumble into the waiting lifeboat. Both of them fainted from loss of blood before the boat was picked up outside the harbour.

Though the enemy's destroyer could have picked up

the ships' boats most easily, the Russians seem to have been strangely unobservant, and the Japanese all pulled out and got away safely. By way of helping them, two Japanese destroyers, the *Aotaka* and *Tsubame*, kept darting forward right under the guns of the forts, dodging here and there at full speed, turning quickly within their own length, backing and shooting ahead, to draw the attention of the Russian gunners; and at times these two plucky little vessels ventured within a mile of the harbour entrance, keeping up a warm fire at the one Russian destroyer which the blocking ships had encountered. It is a remarkable fact that they not only came and went unhurt, but also hit the Russian very badly, Admiral Makaroff reporting to St. Petersburg 'one engineer and six men killed, the Commander and twelve men wounded.' This agrees with Admiral Togo's report: 'Engaged with a destroyer, inflicting apparently serious damage, as it seemed as if the boilers burst.' Considering that this was at a distance of a mile or more, in the dark, with only such light as came from the tops of hills over a mile away, it is surprising that the two official reports were able to be so nearly alike.

The total Japanese casualties were eleven wounded, and the two officers, Hirose and Sugino, killed. No damage to destroyers whatever.

Admiral Makaroff's report gave special credit to Lieutenant Krinisky, of the destroyer *Silny*, for the repulse of this attempt to block the channel, saying, 'He is an officer who thoroughly understands his business, and it was by his skill in firing a torpedo and deflecting the first ship from its course that the whole attempt failed, as the next two steamers followed their

leader, and the last was torpedoed and drifted far across to the opposite side of the channel.'

In one of the numerous encounters between the Russian and Japanese destroyers, the Japanese managed to disable the engines of one of their opponents, and kept up such a hot fire that one by one the Russians fell, killed or wounded, until the last three or four fled below for shelter. The Japanese boat then drew alongside and boarded in good old-fashioned style. One Russian, hearing no more sound of firing, was just putting his head out of the companion-way to see what was the state of affairs, when the Japanese came jumping aboard, and one sweep of a sword cleft his head.

CHAPTER XII

A CHAPTER OF DISASTERS

On the night of April 12 the Japanese torpedo flotilla went forth to lay mines and lie in wait for the enemy's destroyers. It was necessary to plant the mines closer to the harbour mouth than before, and as this meant getting under the guns and searchlights of the forts more than ever, Admiral Togo had obtained a steamer specially adapted for putting down mines accurately while steaming at full speed, with a minimum of risk. This was the *Koryo*, and she had on board two experts—Captains Taneda and Adachi. The night was dark and stormy, and exceptionally cold for April, the thermometer registering 20° below freezing-point. There was a good deal of fog, with some snow now and then, and the searchlights could not penetrate far. As the Japanese destroyers skimmed along within half a mile of the shore, they could see at the signal-station a dim blur of light where the electric searcher tried to pierce the fog, and they at once opened a sharp fusillade at the useless gleam. The Russians, in reply, fired at random, and then realized that the only course in such conditions of weather was to put out the poor, glimmering thing. And the *Koryo* went on undisturbed, putting down about thirty mines of extra large explosive power,

lifting them clear from her hold, and swinging them far out over her side by means of a specially made hoisting tackle, thus preventing any such disaster as befell the *Yenisei*.

While this was being done the Japanese destroyers were cruising about in different directions in search of any Russian destroyers that might be on patrol outside the harbour. The only way to avoid attacking one's own companion vessels by mistake, since no lights can be shown, is to plan carefully the whole movement of the night's work, and know precisely where to expect friends. The section accompanying the *Koryo* had to keep close together, and no other Japanese section was to come near that part of the sea ; therefore, anything coming near was an enemy. Another section of the Japanese circled about a given area of sea, off the extreme point of the peninsula, the boats keeping close together, and ready to attack anything that might come. Any boat accidentally losing touch of its companions must leave the field of action, or it might encounter its friends again and be taken for a foe. There is no time or opportunity to stop and investigate in the dark ; the rule is to open fire on sight.

Two of the Russian destroyers were out on the watch that night, but kept so close to the land that they passed unobserved until near daylight. Then there was a race for the harbour, and four Japanese tried their hardest to cut the two off. It was a fierce test of speed, and one of the Russians just managed to outstrip the pursuers, all the boats firing 12-pounders, 6-pounders, and Maxims as fast as they could. But the sea was rough ; the spray dashed over every boat in cataracts all the time ; and when tearing through a

choppy sea at thirty-five miles an hour—plunging, jumping, swerving, rolling, vibrating, shuddering, darting skyward on the crest of one wave, falling short and diving desperately under the next wave—it is hard work to hold on to the ship, and one must not expect very good target-practice, especially when the target itself is doing exactly the same. Then it is that among the very best of sailors and gunners a hair's-breadth of difference between man and man turns the scale of life and death. If one man has to rattle off a hundred rounds of Maxim before he manages to hit while his opponent achieves it at the ninety-ninth, the one dies, the other wins the day.

Thus it was that the *Viestnitelny* managed to keep in front in the furious race, and got safely home, while the *Bestrajny* received a 3-pounder shell that carried away her piston-rod; and in a few minutes she was last in the race, four Japanese streaking past in pursuit of the other Russian, and only returning to attend to her at their leisure. There was not much time left; the Russian cruisers were beginning to come out, for the day was now an hour old, and the *Bestrajny* was in a few minutes riddled through and through, and went down like a stone. There was not even time to put up a white flag; and these Russian sailors did not wish to do so. Till their vessel lurched and went under, sideways, their guns kept on firing, and the gunners still had their hands gripping the firing-keys as the water closed over them. Over a dozen men floated to the surface, but the Japanese were scurrying away now, and the Russian cruisers were coming. The *Bayan* saved five men, all wounded; fifty-eight were lost. The *Ikazuchi* was struck and had two men

wounded, but no other injury was received by the Japanese boats or men, and they all got away safely.

By this time the big ships were all turning out for their regular 'morning parade.' But the Japanese again tricked their opponents. Only four or five of the lighter cruisers came in sight, to cover the retreat of the destroyers by long-range firing at the *Bayan*. Promptly the whole Russian fleet came out, in line of battle, Admiral Makaroff himself leading in the stately ironclad *Petropaulovsk*. The Japanese cruisers continued firing, and steamed at reduced speed, to keep within range; and the Russians—since a vessel under steam cannot stand still—advanced seaward to fight.

As the great guns slowly boomed forth one by one, at intervals of a few minutes each, little by little the two squadrons drew away to the southward, till they had moved nearly ten miles. It was nearly eight o'clock when they emerged from harbour and began to pick their way slowly through the mine-field; and they continued attacking the Japanese cruisers until a little after nine.

Then the Japanese battleship squadron was seen, away to the eastward, coming up swiftly to try to cut the Russians off from their base. Admiral Togo had received a message by wireless telegraph from his cruisers that they were succeeding in decoying the Russians away from land; and now was his chance at last. He had the six ironclads, *Mikasa*, *Hatsuse*, *Shikishima*, *Asahi*, *Fuji*, and *Yashima*; the two new armoured cruisers *Nishin* and *Kasuga*, bought in Italy and now appearing for the first time in action; and the four decoys which had been seen first. The Russians had the three great ironclads *Petropaulovsk*,

Pobieda, and *Poltava*, one armoured cruiser, *Bayan*, and the unarmoured *Diana*, *Askold*, and *Novik*. It was plain that the odds were overpowering, and it would be merely foolhardy to stay and fight without the backing of the forts. Even with the addition of the *Peresviet* and *Sevastopol*, Makaroff would have had the odds against him ; the three torpedoed ships, *Retvizan*, *Tsarevitch*, and *Pallada*, would have made matters nearly equal ; and if the Vladivostok squadron could have been with him, he would have had a slight superiority. But as matters stood, even the keen fighter Makaroff had to retire. He signalled to all the smaller vessels to get inside the harbour and the bigger ones to form line of battle outside.

The gunners in the forts on the hilltops stood ready, and estimated the distance of the Japanese—ten miles ; then, five minutes later, nine miles ; five minutes more, eight miles ; and soon the battle will begin in earnest, as soon as the range is less than six miles. This would be a real trial of strength.

Suddenly the *Petropaulovsk* shook as in an earthquake, a tremendous explosion rent the huge ship, and a noise like a crash of thunder split the sky. As the vessel partly lifted out of the water, there came a second and a third roar and shock ; portions of the ship's deck and fittings flew up in all directions ; everything was enveloped in a dense cloud of yellowish-brown smoke, with tongues of flame like forked lightning darting into the heavens. Men and severed limbs, twisted pieces of metal and masses of blazing wreckage, sailed upwards and outwards, and fell all around in the sea. The waters for a moment shrank back from the doomed ship, then rushed upon her in

an enormous wave, rising in a few seconds right over her funnels ; her masts only stood out another moment ; then her stern lifted out of the water, with the twin screws turning helplessly in the air, and the *Petropaulovsk* disappeared for ever. The waters closed and smoothed out over her tomb, and a few mites of men were seen struggling in the icy waves. The 'fighting Admiral,' Russia's greatest hope, was no more. Seven hundred men had perished in a flash of time, before the reverberations of the explosion had finished echoing among the hills.

The whole fleet looked on, terror-stricken at the suddenness and magnitude of the disaster. Many never even saw, but heard cries of horror and turned to look . . . . only the waves were splashing gently where the flagship had floated but a minute before. Soon the torpedo-boats moved over, and the other ships lowered their lifeboats, to pull round and round, for half an hour, picking up men and pieces of wreck. Then, as it became certain that Admiral Makaroff could never again issue an order, Rear-Admiral Oukhtomsky, on the *Bayan*, took charge, and sent all the ships inside. Slowly, not knowing when another awful calamity might come, the ships steered in, firing as they went, for the Japanese were still in sight. The *Petropaulovsk* went down at half-past ten ; in an hour, all hope of the Admiral being found on any of the rescue boats was gone, and the command devolved on his successor ; and a little after twelve o'clock saw the last of the Russian ships disappearing inside the port, and the last of the Japanese fading away on the sky-line.

Among the drowned was the celebrated painter,

Vasili Verestchagin, one of Russia's greatest artists, and a war veteran. Like all men of human feeling, he had a keen realization of the horrors of war, and his battle pictures created such a sensation that the Russian Government at last had to prohibit their exhibition, on the ground that such vivid portrayal would affect the spirit of soldiers.

Another who perished was Captain Kraun, of the gunboat *Manjour*. His vessel was in Shanghai on the outbreak of war, and very promptly the Japanese placed the cruiser *Akitsushima* and two destroyers to wait and watch outside the river that runs up to Shanghai from the mouth of the Yangtse. Negotiations regarding the neutrality of the port went on for a long time; the foreign Powers all insisted that China must enforce the law of neutrality, and make the *Manjour* leave or disarm, while the Russian Minister in Peking tried various means to delay either action, in the hope of finding some way out of the dilemma. If the command of the sea had gone out of Japan's hands for a day, the warships waiting outside the Whangpoo River would have had to abandon their post, and the *Manjour* might have rejoined the main squadron. Ultimately she had to disarm, and, according to a despatch dated March 3 from the Russian to the Chinese officials, the crew should have returned to Russia, on parole not to engage in the war.

Among the survivors picked up, wounded and nearly frozen, was the Grand Duke Cyril, a Prince of the Imperial house and cousin of the Tsar. He was on the bridge with the Admiral, and, in describing his experiences, he said: 'It suddenly seemed as if the world, sea, sky, and everything had been rent asunder,

and from the gulf arose a devouring cloud of flame, which burst with a deafening roar into a huge volume of suffocating fumes.' He at once lost consciousness; the last he knew was that he was thrown violently against a stanchion. He was not stunned for long; opening his eyes, he saw the ship torn open and burning, the deck upheaved, and he felt the bridge under him falling away. He rushed down to the deck, and dived overboard. When he came to the surface the ship had gone, drawing down most of the crew with it. He clung to some floating wreckage, and was found by a torpedo-boat after about fifteen minutes, which seemed hours. He was badly burnt about the body, and his head and legs were cut and bruised. But the shock of the awful tragedy left a deeper mark than the wounds.

The loss of the ship was a serious blow, but the loss of the Admiral was far worse. Makaroff was Russia's 'trump card.' He was the most daring and the most up-to-date, scientific naval man in Russia. He was the inventor of several ingenious devices connected with ships: one was for preventing collisions, another was an ice-breaker for frozen harbours, and a third was an improved diving apparatus. He was of fine physique, and his fondness for outdoor sports induced the late Tsar Alexander to dub him 'The Englishman.' Hale and hearty, he was an extreme type of irrepressible energy. It is recorded that he once offered a silver cup for a swimming race among the men of his fleet, and was much disgusted to find that the winner took longer than himself over the same distance. He was one of the most intelligent of the great men of Russia, and could well understand the

value of enlightened government in building up the strength and well-being of the nation. He once went so far as to tell the late Tsar that a nation, like a man, cannot be strong unless it takes care of the 'mens sana in corpore sano,' and to expect efficiency from a repressed people was as bad as expecting a gun to fire when the muzzle was plugged. In both cases, he said, the only end could be an explosion.

Admiral Makaroff had a high opinion of the British. In one of the discussions on world-supremacy, an idea ever present in Russian minds, he told some of the Russian statesmen that he considered the future struggle for the mastery of the whole world would be between Russia and Great Britain. And he added: 'From my knowledge of the two, it will be disastrous for both.'

In the Russo-Turkish War Makaroff made a name for himself as a bold and skilful naval officer. He and Skrydloff (who took charge at Port Arthur after him) were together engaged on the torpedo work in the Danube, and succeeded in blowing up several Turkish warships. That was the first war in which torpedoes had been used systematically, though there had been some crude experiments in the American War of North and South in 1866-1867.

The body of Admiral Makaroff was found in the water twelve days later. Having been on the bridge, he might have got clear of the ship, but he was probably stunned by the explosion, and the weight of his overcoat, sword, and other things would sink him, until some parts became detached after several days' immersion. Most of his officers and men were entombed in the ship.

The Japanese showed their respect for a brave antagonist by putting their flags at half-mast as soon as they learned of his death. The loss of the ship they could see, but the news about the Admiral went round the world by wire to St. Petersburg, thence to Paris and London, then back to Japan, and from Japan to the naval base at Elliott Island. It was the evening of the 14th, when officers and men were just finishing supper, and feeling in high spirits at their successes of the previous day. The order came from the Captain to muster all hands on deck. In solemn tones he read out to them the Japanese translation of a Reuter telegram, and said it became every brave man to honour a fallen foe who had proved his worth. It was the duty of a fighting man to die, if fortune so decreed, but sympathy was always a strong feature of Japanese warriors when the fight was over. He therefore directed that the whole fleet should observe one day's mourning for the death of the brave Russian Admiral and his 600 sailors. The speech so impressed the hearers that they dismissed in silence, and all the merriment that had been enlivening the evening disappeared.

Nor was this the only chivalrous tribute paid by the Japanese to the memory of the brave dead foe. On ordinary occasions when there was news of Japanese success in the war, there was no lack of public rejoicing: flags were hung out in the streets in all towns in Japan, and on special occasions triumphal arches of evergreens were put up. Thus the torpedoing of the three big ships on the night of February 8 had been celebrated—though, to the great credit of the nation, it must be said there has always been a remarkable lack

of excesses such as have been known in some Western countries in connection with the celebration of victories. Now, the sinking of the great *Petropaulovsk* and the death of the famous Admiral meant very much more than any previous achievement of the Japanese; yet, instead of rejoicings, the whole Japanese nation showed as deep and genuine sympathy as if it had been a disaster to a close friend and allied nation instead of an enemy. It was no affectation, but exactly on a par with the chivalrous nature shown all through the feudal days of Japan, when it was quite common for two warriors to fight till one died, and the victor would be chief mourner, in all sincerity.

These facts are important in view of the apprehensions frequently expressed by foreign writers as to the probable attitude of the Japanese after the war if they are victorious throughout. The words of Count Okuma, at a dinner of the Oxford and Cambridge Society of Japan carry the hallmark of genuine feeling: 'Gentlemen, we all admire a hero, be he friend or foe. We learn that Admiral Makaroff, a sailor second to none in courage and ability, has gone down in his flagship, with all hands. However much we may love to hear of our arms being victorious in defence of our native land, and however determined we are to carry this war through with all our might, we cannot help deploring the death of brave men. And while we hope that the report of our signal victory will prove true, we at the same time hope that at least one man was saved from the wreck—Admiral Makaroff.'

It was plainly the Russian policy now to avoid risking their remnant of a squadron and try to save it

in hope of reinforcements. So they laid new sets of mines in the channel, to explode by electricity from the forts, and thus their own ships might come and go, but the enemy could not. But as they had not engouh mines of this type to cover the entire ground, they had recourse to the sinking of steamers to prevent the Japanese from getting in. They could not afford to let the Japanese block the passage completely, but by sinking some of their own vessels to narrow the channel, they hoped to keep it clear more easily. They also laid strong wooden booms, made of sixty or eighty large logs bound together with wire ropes and anchored at places chosen to obstruct any Japanese raiders, while leaving a very zigzag path open for Russians. On May 3, the Japanese made their greatest blocking expedition of all. There were eight steamers, bigger and faster than those used before: the *Mikawa*, *Sakura*, *Totomi*, *Edo*, *Otaru*, *Sagami*, *Aikoku*, and *Asagao*. The night was very stormy, and the ships all arrived straggling. The Commander had ordered them back on account of the weather, but they could not or would not see the signals. Amid the howling wind and raging sea, they charged at the booms, in the face of a hundred guns and the unknown terrors of hidden mines; and at last the channel was really blocked. Only sixty-seven of the men got back; sixty-three were killed, and thirty got ashore in isolated parties, and made wild—utterly wild—rushes up the hillsides to charge the Russian forts; and so were captured, fighting to the last.

Days passed into weeks as the Japanese ships continued their challenge to battle and the Russians continued to venture out only a little and put back;

and the dangerous, desperate night-work went on with varying fortune, more steamers being sunk in the channel, more mines planted; and the mines which one combatant placed in the roadstead were cautiously fished for and exploded by the other. And a month after the great Russian disaster, the Japanese had one almost as great.

On May 15, the first-class battleship *Hatsuse*, flagship of Rear-Admiral Nashiba, struck two mines in quick succession, and went down, 300 of her crew being saved; and earlier in the day, before sunrise, the cruiser *Yoshino* was sunk by collision with the *Kasuga*, and only ninety of her crew were saved. The loss of the two ships was greater in itself than the loss of the Russian flagship, and the number of men drowned was about the same, but the Japanese lost no admiral, and their predominance on the sea was not lost nor even much weakened. The total loss of life on the Russian ship was believed to be 624, including the Admiral and his chief of staff, and fourteen other staff officers, besides ten of the ship's own officers. The survivors were only about forty, including six officers and the Grand Duke Cyril. On the *Hatsuse* there were 741 officers and men, of whom 424 were drowned; and on the *Yoshino* there were 360, of whom 97 were saved, leaving the total death-roll 687.

Neither of the ships went down during battle. The *Yoshino* was on a night cruise, patrolling, and was accompanied by the *Kasuga*, *Chitose*, and two smaller cruisers. They went on duty about 6 p.m., and were to withdraw at midnight, returning by a wide détour to the base of operations, so as to avoid risk of meet-

ing in the dark the other Japanese vessels which were to go on patrol then; for any meeting would involve risk of mistaking friends for enemies. Thus the ships were forty or fifty miles south of Liaotung, and nearer to Shantung, about 1.30 a.m. Then the course had to be altered so as to head north-east, to the base; and one vessel made the turn more readily than the other. The *Kasuga* could not answer her helm in as short a curve as the *Yoshino*, but happened to be on the inside of the curve, and in the fog the two could not see each other until the collision was inevitable. The *Kasuga's* ram cut into the *Yoshino's* port side, aft, with great violence. Captain Saiki was on the bridge, and immediately ordered collision mats out, to stop the inrush of water. Next he ordered boats out, as the vessel was heeling over quickly and seemed to be already sinking. With perfect order, all boats were lowered, and most of the crew had got into them, when the ship finally gave a lurch and went under. The Captain was on the bridge to the last, watching till all his men could get off, and as the *Yoshino* sank he called for a cheer for Japan, and the whole crew responded bravely with 'Banzai!' But the final roll of the cruiser carried many of the boats under, and only the big No. 2 cutter, with seventy men in her and a few others clinging to her sides, managed to draw clear of the suction of the waves. The other cruisers stopped and sent boats, and search was kept up for half an hour, but no more than ninety-seven survived. Rear-Admiral Dewa, in command of the squadron, at once reported by wireless telegraph to Admiral Togo.

The *Hatsuse* came to grief in broad daylight with

no fog. Three battleships had just arrived in front of Port Arthur, and were slowly steaming up and down about ten or twelve miles off shore, as they had done so often. On this day the duty fell to the *Hatsuse*, *Shikishima*, and *Yashima*, with the smaller ships *Kasagi* and *Tatsuta* in attendance, fast boats of small fighting power. At 10.15 there was a muffled roar under the port quarter, and it was felt that the ship had struck a mine. The sea was rather rough. Collision mats were got over the side and boats were made ready, while the Captain went below to inspect damage. The ship heeled a good deal, but her water-tight compartments seemed to save her, and the Captain told the Admiral there was no immediate danger. Signals were made for a vessel to come and tow the *Hatsuse*, as her steering was impeded by the damage to her stern, and while the Captain was having another look at the damage below there was a second explosion, about half an hour after the first one.

This time the ship was struck forward, just under the magazine, as in the case of the *Petropaulovsk;* the result was a double eruption, and the whole ship was split open by a great rush of black smoke and flame, uprooting the funnels and masts, lifting the deck off the ship, and shattering the whole structure. She sank in less than a minute, and there was no time to give any orders. The Captain was killed in the lower part of the ship. Rear-Admiral Nashiba was picked up out of the water, and transferred his flag to the *Shikishima*. The occurrence was seen from the shore, and the Russian destroyers, sixteen in all, hurried out of port to see if there was any chance to

attack. The *Tatsuta* and *Kasagi* went to meet them, and opened fire, whereupon the Russians withdrew, as their guns were outranged.

Alike on the *Hatsuse* and *Yoshino*, one of the first things done was to rescue the Imperial portrait.

The mines which sank the battleship could not have been fixed to the sea-bed, as such things are supposed to be, for the depth at this place is 300 fathoms. Viceroy Alexieff's official report says that the ship sank ten or twelve miles to the south-east of Port Arthur, and there could not be any mine-field there. It was clear proof that mines had been sent afloat to drift wherever the sea might carry them, and when that is done there is no knowing what part of the 'Seven Seas' they may reach. They certainly go on floating and drifting until they strike something and blow up, or are stranded on a beach, or until the metal rusts away enough to let the water in and carry them to the bottom. That means months or years, and meanwhile these terrible explosive machines are a danger to all humanity.

It was remarkable that the Russians should send out only their destroyers, for in broad daylight such craft can never hope to come near ships whose guns can carry five miles or more. The biggest gun a destroyer has would do no harm to an ironclad, and a torpedo cannot be used at greater range than 2,000 yards. The destroyers, therefore, could not have been sent out to attack big ships; night or fog would be necessary for that. The reason for sending them could only be that the Russians counted on a panic, or at least a flight of the bigger vessels after the *Hatsuse* had sunk. In this they misjudged the Japanese

temper, and the end was that a steady line of warships formed to repel them, and they had to retreat without accomplishing anything. Furthermore, the move had revealed a fact which the Japanese were prompt to note—namely, that the bigger ships of the Russian fleet would not come out, even when there seemed to be a chance to do something. This might mean that the channel had been effectively blocked for all but small vessels, or that the Russians were getting short of heavy ammunition, or were afraid of mines striking any deep-draught ship, or wanted to save coal, or had resolved to do nothing until the three big ships could be repaired. Whatever the reason might be, the appearance of the destroyers alone on this occasion showed that the Russian fleet, for the time being, had ceased to exist. It might yet take months to reduce the forts and drive the ships into the open, and until that could be done, the Russian fleet's power of doing harm was not absolutely gone. But it was by this time practically crushed beyond hope of recovery. The contest for sea-power was virtually at an end.

The central feature of the war in the first three months was Admiral Togo's great work in crushing and crippling the Port Arthur squadron. It emphatically decided the all-important question of naval supremacy, on which the whole war hinged. Had he failed, Japan could, it is true, have resisted any force that tried to gain a footing on her soil; but that would not have been necessary. If the Russian fleet had been able to keep at sea, even if the Japanese still had a strong navy, it would have been difficult, and I think impossible, for Japan to continue the war. A single cruiser flying about preying on commerce can spread terror and

end almost all oversea trade in its zone. There would still be a few merchant steamers found to run risks at fancy prices, but a maritime country like Japan cannot thrive on the amount of supplies procurable by blockade-runners. Cut off from the world, Japan could indeed exist; but it is certain that such an existence would become miserable soon, and she would be strongly inclined to make peace on whatever terms she could get, short of downright subjection—that is, if the Russians had been able to keep any of their ships in the open, not necessarily to defeat the Japanese, but to elude them, and maintain a sort of naval guerilla. Therefore everything turned on Admiral Togo's power, not to destroy Port Arthur, not to wipe the fleet out of existence, not even to blockade the place entirely, but to make quite sure that the coasts of Japan, and the sea routes leading there, should be unmolested. Up to the end of April nothing else of serious importance was done; everything had to wait for this. And this was the total of work done.

Totally lost:

Varyag and *Koreyetz*, February 9.
Yenisei and *Boyarin*, February 11 and 12.
Manjour, disarmed, Shanghai, February.
Sivoutch, isolated, Newchwang.
Vnushitelny, destroyer, Port Arthur, February 24.
Stereguchy, destroyer, Port Arthur, March 10.
Petropaulovsk and *Bestrajny*, April 13.
Bogatyr, cruiser, wrecked near Vladivostok about the end of April.

To these must be added the following, rendered useless for a time:

Retvizan and *Tsarevitch*, battleships, needing six months or more to repair.

Pallada, armoured cruiser, useless for three months or more.
Sevastopol, and *Peresviet*, battleships, damaged by shells, laid up for two or three weeks.
Pobieda, partly disabled by mine, April 13.

There were several other reports, such as that the *Bobre* was blown up at Dalny, and the *Poltava*, *Askold*, and *Diana* crippled at various times; but there was some doubt about them. But the undoubted items in the record were quite enough to show that Russian naval power in the East was at an end, and the next thing was to continue the war on land. The subsequent naval occurrences contained much that was interesting and instructive, much that was highly exciting, but nothing that could affect the general result. Nor was there any vital importance in the losses sustained by the Japanese fleet. Up to the end of April these were practically nil. Then came:

Torpedo-boat 48, destroyed by mine at Talienwan, May 12.
Miyako, third-class cruiser, blown up by mine in Talienwan, May 14.
Hatsuse, sunk by mine off Port Arthur, May 15.
Yoshino, sunk by collision, May 15.

There must be recorded also the sinking of the troopship *Kinshiu* by the Vladivostok squadron on April 26; but that belongs properly to the military part of the story of the war, which was merely in its preparatory stages during the progress of the naval operations. It may be said that the death of Admiral Makaroff was the climax of the sea-fighting, and the war on land began in earnest then.

CHAPTER XIII

PRELIMINARIES OF THE LAND WAR

The land-fighting has been the chief part of the war, the part on which the end chiefly depends. The naval part was an important prelude, and greatly influenced the rest of the war, but did not in itself decide anything of vital importance. In the peculiar circumstances of the two nations, sea-fighting would not be likely to result in a final decision. Had the Japanese fleet absolutely ceased to exist, I do not think that all the power of Russia would ever have been able to subdue forty millions of such desperate fighters as the Japanese. And conversely, the worst that the Russians ever contemplated in reference to their fleet—namely, total annihilation—was regarded by them with comparative indifference. It was regrettable, exasperating, humiliating, to find that the Japanese fleet was so much stronger; but it was not fatal. The sea-fighting alone might have been enough to bring about peace. If Japan had been defeated on the water, she would probably have tried to arrange for peace. But it would not have been lasting on either side. Though sea battles have contributed so largely towards the decisions of the greatest issues in the world's history, it has seldom happened that the sea decided alone, or even chiefly. Thus, Marathon

was more decisive than Salamis; the Roman Empire was built up almost solely by armies, and was destroyed solely by them; sea power was nothing for or against Attila and Jenghiz Khan. In modern times, remarkable as were the sea fights in the Napoleonic wars, their effect was but secondary in importance; Nelson, indeed, saved England, but he could not have saved Europe. In fact, naval force is most important as a first line of defence for an island nation, or a first step in attack, but, as a rule, is merely auxiliary in bringing about a final decision.

And so it seems to me that, of all the battles in the Russo-Japanese War, the most decisive was on land. And of all the land battles, I think the decisive one was that of May 1, on the banks of the Yalu River.

It is not the amount of slaughter that makes a battle important, nor is it the degree of difficulty, nor the skill shown or not shown. But the importance lies chiefly in the far-reaching effects of what actually took place, compared with what might have happened. There have been greater combats than that of the Yalu, larger armies engaged, higher skill required, more valuable strategic positions at stake, and much harder fighting. But these later battles simply confirmed the decision of the first fight. It broke the spell of the 'irresistible power' of Russia, the tradition of her immovable masses of infantry. It shattered for ever the fatalistic doctrine that the European must prevail over the Asiatic, the white over the yellow or brown. It showed the Japanese that Russians could be beaten, could surrender, could fly in disorder and abandon valuable war material, could lose an important strategic position, whether on account of divided counsels, or

insufficient numbers, or slow movement, or small skill, or whatever might be the reason. It opened the eyes of the Japanese to the reality of what had been only a hope; it opened the eyes of the Russians to a stern truth that was the more terrifying because never suspected. It was the keynote of the war on land.

At the outset of the war there were in Manchuria the following troops:

1. *Port Arthur.*—Infantry: 3rd Brigade, comprising 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Regiments of East Siberian Rifles (nominal full strength 2,000 men per regiment); 7th Brigade, part, comprising 25th and 26th Regiments of East Siberian Rifles (other parts of this brigade at Haicheng and Liaoyang).

Cavalry: One troop of Trans-Baikal Cossacks (150 men).

Artillery: One regiment of garrison artillery stationed in the forts (2,400 men); two companies East Siberian Field Artillery (600 men, 16 guns). Pioneer corps: Two battalions East Siberian Pioneers (1,000 men). Torpedo corps: One company (200 men).

(Of the above, the 9th, 10th, and 12th East Siberian Rifle Regiments were marched to Pitsuwo, Takushan, and the Yalu in the early days of the war.)

Total at Port Arthur, 20,350 men.

2. *Dalny.*—Infantry: 14th Regiment East Siberian Rifles (2,000 men).

3. *Talienwan* (on north side of bay, facing Dalny).—Infantry: 13th Regiment East Siberian Rifles (2,000 men); half of 15th Regiment East Siberian Rifles (1,000 men).

Cavalry: Four companies Trans-Baikal Cossacks (600 men).

Artillery: One company East Siberian Field Artillery (300 men, 8 guns); one company Trans-Baikal Field Artillery (300 men, 8 guns). Torpedo corps: One company (200 men).

Total at Talienwan, 4,400 men.

4. *Pitsuwo.*—Infantry: One company 12th East Siberian Rifles (250 men).

Cavalry: One troop Trans-Baikal Cossacks (150 men).

Total at Pitsuwo, 400 men.

5. *Antung* (on the Yalu River).—Infantry: One company 15th East Siberian Rifles (250 men).

Cavalry: One troop Trans-Baikal Cossacks (150 men).

Artillery: Half-company East Siberian Field Artillery (150 men, 4 guns).

Total at Antung, 550 men.

6. *Fengwhancheng* (near the Yalu River). — Cavalry: Three companies Trans-Baikal Cossacks (450 men).

Artillery: One company Trans-Baikal Field Artillery (300 men, 8 guns).

Total at Fengwhancheng, 750 men.

7. *Kinchow* (near Talienwan).—Infantry: Three companies East Siberian Rifles (750 men).

8. *Yinkow* (port of Newchwang).—Infantry: Five companies East Siberian Rifles (1,250 men).

Artillery: Half-company East Siberian Battalion (150 men, 4 guns).

Total at Yinkow, 1,400 men.

9. *Haicheng.*—Infantry: Half 28th East Siberian Rifles (1,000 men).

Artillery: Half-company East Siberian Battalion (150 men, 4 guns).

Total at Haicheng, 1,150 men.

10. *Liaoyang.*—Infantry: Three companies 15th East Siberian Rifles (750 men); four companies 28th East Siberian Rifles (1,000 men).

Artillery: Half-company Trans-Baikal Field Artillery (150 men, 4 guns).

Total at Liaoyang, 1,900 men.

11. *Moukden.*—Infantry: One company 15th East Siberian Rifles (250 men).

Cavalry: One troop Trans-Baikal Cossacks (150 men).

Artillery: Half-company Trans-Baikal Field Artillery (150 men, 4 guns).

Total at Moukden, 550 men.

12. *Tiehlin* (north of Moukden).—Infantry: 16th East Siberian Rifle Regiment (2,000 men).

Artillery: 7th Company 1st Brigade East Siberian Field Artillery (300 men, 8 guns); two companies Trans-Baikal Field Artillery (300 men, 12 guns).

Cavalry: One troop Amur Cossacks (150 men).

Total at Tiehlin, 2,750 men.

13. *Ninguta* (North-East Manchuria).—Infantry: Two companies 18th East Siberian Rifles (500 men).

Cavalry: Three troops Amur Cossacks (450 men).

Artillery: One company East Siberian Field Artillery (300 men, 8 guns).

Total at Ninguta, 1,250 men.

14. *Harbin* (where the Vladivostok and the Port Arthur railway-lines meet the Trans-Siberian).—Infantry: 17th Regiment East Siberian Rifles (2,000 men); 18th Regiment East Siberian Rifles, six companies (1,500 men).

Cavalry: One troop Amur Cossacks, 150 men.

Artillery: One battalion East Siberian Field Artillery (900 men, 24 guns).

Total at Harbin, 4,550 men.

15. *Tsitsihar* (North-West Manchuria).—Infantry: Six companies 20th East Siberian Rifles (1,500 men).

Artillery: One company of 2nd Brigade of East Siberian Artillery (300 men, 8 guns).

Cavalry: One troop Amur Cossacks (150 men).

Total at Tsitsihar, 1,950 men.

16. *Hailar* (North-West Manchuria).—Infantry: Four companies of 3rd Battalion Nerchinsk Reserves.

Total at all points, 45,700 men, 120 field guns.

In addition, there was a separate organization of 'railway patrol' troops, stationed in small bodies at many points on and near the railway. Their numbers were not certain. The organization was of recent formation, because when the agreement was made to withdraw all Russian troops from Manchuria except those needed to guard the railway, many of the regular troops were simply reformed under this name. About January 1, 1904, the number of these railway troops was estimated at 56 companies of infantry—14,000 men—and four companies of artillery—1,200 men, with 32 guns.

Thus the grand total at the beginning of the year would be about 60,000 men, with about 150 field guns.

But the number of troops had been increasing steadily since September. The figures given above represent the known garrisons at fixed points, all the new arrivals being constantly on the move, getting slowly forward towards Liaotung and the Korean frontier. Of these there is no precise estimate available. Russian numbers are often exaggerated. When General Kuropatkin paid a flying visit to the Far East last year, he and Viceroy Alexieff held a grand review at Port Arthur, when there were supposed to be 60,000 men of the navy and army present; but it is recorded by credible witnesses that, counting as closely as a spectator can, so many men abreast as they marched past, so many files per company, so many companies altogether, there were certainly not more than 40,000. It is one of the commonest failings of Russians, high and low, to make things seem much better than they are, and it is one of the chief reasons why they have experienced such bitter disappointments when the state of affairs was sternly tested by war.

The through-connection was established between St. Petersburg and Port Arthur about the end of August, when the first trial runs were made. But it took several weeks longer before the original roughnesses and flaws of the new construction could be put right and regular trains could start running. In October, just at the time when the promised evacuation of Manchuria should have been completed, troop-trains began pouring in regiment after regiment, as fast as the line could work. The authorities gave out an explanation that they merely desired, by actual experiment, to test the capacity of the line, to satisfy themselves how many troops really might be moved

along it in a given time. These experiments went on until Lake Baikal froze, about the end of October or beginning of November; and then, of course, the troops experimentally moved into Manchuria could not go back to Russia. As the railway-line had only got to work so recently, its capacity was found, as yet, far below expectations; and it is believed that there were not more than 20,000 or 30,000 troops, with all baggage and field equipment, put into Manchuria up to the end of the year. In winter the movement of troops was very small. Thus the total of fixed garrisons, railway patrol corps, and new arrivals combined would probably be under 100,000 men when the war broke out in February.

It was to a great extent the railway, and the progress of the experiments with troop-trains, and the optimist estimates of future capabilities, that dictated the tone of the replies from St. Petersburg to the insistent applications from Tokyo. The promised evacuation of Manchuria synchronized fairly well with the commencement of through traffic. When October 8 was at hand, the question was—to withdraw, or not to withdraw. And the Finance Minister, M. de Witte, one of the few Russians with a good business head, first took a run over the line, and came back saying: 'It will not do; we are not ready yet. We must withdraw, and wait for a better opportunity after we have made the line better.' Then the War Minister, Kuropatkin, went over the line, and was assured by Alexieff and all the high officials in the Far East that the line would answer every call on it, and so he went back to St. Petersburg, de Witte was overruled, and the troops did not withdraw from Manchuria.

ON THE WAY TO THE FRONT.

Photo by Chas. Urban Co.

COSSACKS CROSSING LAKE BAIKAL.

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JAPANESE LANDING IN KOREA.

Again, in November and December St. Petersburg found that the Japanese were more and more threatening, and every time Mr. Komura pressed his demand for a straightforward answer St. Petersburg had to wire to the Far East—to Port Arthur and to Baikal—asking how the movement of troops had progressed, and whether it was safe to continue holding Manchuria. Viceroy Alexieff, in effect, replied that the position was excellent, troops could be transported in unlimited numbers over the line as soon as steamers could run again on Lake Baikal, and in the meantime men could march round by land or cross on the ice There was no danger of war, for the Japanese would not fight, and if they did, the defences were perfect. Still, he agreed that it would be better to keep them in a good humour somehow till the transcontinental railway could be got into full working order, and then defy them to do their worst.

But the Japanese could see which way the wind blew. Almost every garrison town in Manchuria had its Japanese barber-shop, Japanese restaurant, and a few other Japanese here and there, and they have a wonderful knack of keeping their eyes and ears open. In Port Arthur itself Viceroy Alexieff was by no means careful to keep his thoughts to himself, but frequently discussed the position of affairs with his officers in the hearing of servants. All good house servants in this part of the world are Chinese, or seem to be Chinese; how many of them may be Japanese nobody knows. But it is known, not as a surmise or a rumour, but as a fact, which can, if necessary, be proved, that one of Alexieff's last telegrams to St. Petersburg before war began said, practically: 'It

is not necessary to withdraw nor to give any pledge; but it will be sufficient to preserve a peaceful tone while making no concessions; and by April it will not even be necessary to trouble about a peaceful tone.' And knowing this—knowing what troops were at the front, and what would be possible if the railway had a few months of peace to perfect its working—the Japanese declined to await attack.

The Japanese army consisted of:

	Officers and Men.
Staff	9,093
Infantry	278,160
Cavalry	21,760
Artillery	74,240
Engineers	24,560
Gendarmes	7,000
Transport, medical, commissariat, etc. ...	51,720
Total	466,533

The maximum number that could be put in the field in the last resort is difficult to estimate. The nation has been under conscription for about twenty years, all men except those medically unfit having to serve a term in the army, the length of service being subject to variations and a few classes being exempt. In a nation of forty millions there must be, with such a system, at least one million able-bodied adult males who have had a military training. There is no lack of facilities to arm and equip them, and there is an abundant supply of admirably trained officers. Owing to the shortness of the distance and the possession of the sea routes, Japan could make use of the whole of this force, while Russia soon found that, however many millions she might have in Europe, she could not maintain in the field at the end of 6,000 miles of single

line more than 300,000 troops and keep them fully supplied with food and ammunition, and fresh men to take the places of killed, wounded, and sick.

There were many different statements put forward as to the number of trains per day and the number of troops per train, the amount of supplies for so many months, and so on, but the net result of it all was that 300,000 was, in practice, the largest army that could be kept up. All attempts to exceed that limit only led to congestion of traffic, confusion of orders, and deadlocks at many points. At first the railway authorities and military chiefs could not understand it, for their inexperience had prevented them from foreseeing the limitations which so often differentiate practice from promise. Anyone who has never seen a block in Piccadilly, or watched how much care and system is necessary to get anything through the short length of Cheapside, would be at a loss to imagine how it would be. But if one can realize what 6,000 miles of Cheapside would be like, it is easy to see how Russia's entire scheme came to grief. As a means of dominating the Far East, the railway is a gigantic delusion. And it cost over a hundred million pounds sterling.

Though there was no serious fighting on land until May, the movement of Japanese troops to the scene of action had commenced at the very first call to arms—on February 6. Indeed, the advance guard had begun the move before that, for when the telegram came to Sasebo that peace was at an end there were about 3,000 men ready, fully equipped, to step on board the troopships; and they were afloat within an hour.

From that time every railway-line in Japan commenced steadily pouring troops into the depots, and

steamers took them off as fast as they came. It was understood from the first that Admiral Togo would keep the Russian fleet fully occupied, and these troop-ships went oversea practically unprotected. At first there was an element of doubt and of risk, but as the news came day by day the danger vanished almost entirely. Yet not quite. It was always possible that some deadly little torpedo-boat might creep out of Port Arthur or some unthought-of shelter, under cover of night and fog, and make a bold dash past the Japanese patrol-boats to prowl about the line of communications. All along the western side of Korea there are myriads of islands, with endless winding labyrinths of waterways between—tricky little twists and turns, full of eddies and whirlpools, with abnormal rise and fall of tide and swift-rushing currents; and many wide stretches of innocent-looking smooth water, where six hours later there would be banks of black, oozy mud sticking up, and bits of jagged rock fringing the mud—an ideal place for a Paul Jones to cruise in recklessly and cunningly, darting out on big ships unawares when they had no room to manœuvre. Nothing could be better as a 'happy hunting ground' for a modern knight-errant in a swift little torpedo-boat destroyer.

But it would need born sailors of the best sort to be able to get about in these places without being wrecked.

The Japanese transports mostly went in fleets of eight or ten, each fleet carrying a brigade of three regiments—2,000 men in a regiment—with 'extras,' such as staff services, signal corps, telegraphists, and so on, making about 7,000 men to a brigade. These would require, with their baggage and everything,

eight or ten steamers, according to size. Sometimes two brigades went together; and more than once a fleet of about twenty-five transports would be sighted by some passing foreign vessel. Each unit took its own complete impedimenta, so that there need be no waiting for a supply-ship. The reserve supplies went over in solitary ships, or in twos or threes, as they were got ready. During February and March there must have been at least two divisions, of three brigades to a division, and many details besides, making over 50,000 men hurried over the water in the first six weeks. Then the first rush was over, and the pace slackened, but not very much. In the five weeks from the end of March to the beginning of May there would be about 30,000 troops leaving Japan. And at the battle of the Yalu, on May 1, there were probably about 50,000 in action; 15,000 close to the scene of action, but not engaged in it; 5,000 at various points along the lines of communication between Seoul, Pingyang, and Wiju; 5,000 in and about Seoul and Chemulpo; and 5,000 stationed in Southern Korea, at Fusan, Mokpo, Masampo, and up the east coast, at Gensan and small places further north. Immediately after the crossing of the Yalu and the final blocking of Port Arthur there was another great movement of troops, about 70,000 going over during May, and then a slackening to 50,000 in June.

To move such large numbers, to get them into position, and get supplies sent after them in regular flow, was an enormous task; and the methodical, almost automatic, way in which the Japanese did the work constituted one of the principal factors in their success, especially when compared with the confusion

and unbusinesslike ways of the Russians. But to do all this properly meant long periods of waiting—that is to say, periods when the outer world was kept waiting and could not get news. The Japanese were too busy to give out news. They were as hard at work as an army of stage-carpenters and machinery experts in a theatre, fixing up everything ready for the performance. Not a word of what is going on behind the scenes can be given out; and anybody trying to lift the curtain before the time, or to make his way in behind the scenes, is an intruder, an enemy, whether he means to be one or not. All the world was eager, impatient, insistent to know what was being done, and what was going to be done.

The Japanese authorities knew the danger of letting anything out. It was said by many of the newspaper correspondents who crowded to Tokyo at the outbreak of war that there ought to be no restriction on the publication of such items as would not help the enemy; but that is an easy thing to say, and an almost impossible thing to put into effect. At any rate, it is so difficult that the Japanese were quite right to decline all such suggestions as long as they could. There is in the long-run no sort of news that a correspondent could give his readers without conveying some hint to the enemy; and though the correspondents argue that the enemy is bound to find out many things anyhow, that is no reason for helping him. A journalist's instinct is to give out everything that is interesting; a general needs to go to the opposite extreme. There may perhaps be some interesting items that would do no harm, but one never knows, and it is best to be on the safe side; there is no time to sift and sort out the

myriads of items that the ingenuity of a hundred keen writers might bring forth. A man playing a game of chess or cards cannot bear to have people standing round discussing his play aloud, commenting on what he does, or what he might have done or may yet do. A war is more than a game of chess or bridge.

I know how the correspondents in the Spanish-American War, in their eagerness to outdo each other, wired information which was of the greatest use to the enemy. From Manila went telegrams which appeared in New York, and were wired back to the Junta Filipina in Hongkong, to be smuggled over to the Philippines again; and this happened not once, but all the time. In the Boer War it was the same, with the additional complication that there were correspondents of party newspapers opposed to the war, and they had instructions, of course, to send the sort of stuff their readers liked—with injurious results to the nation. And the Japanese Government had its military attachés in these wars watching the course of events very closely, and reporting most carefully to their Government. The one point they most strongly emphasized was 'Beware of these correspondents.' And I am sure there will be a large number of British and American army officers who will most fervently endorse the caution. Men like Archibald Forbes and Dr. Russell would not have brought the profession of war correspondent to this pass; but there have been so many less worthy men in the business in recent years that it is done to death. The authorities cannot discriminate, or can only do so occasionally.

It is not only the 'yellow journals' that are to blame. Even *The Times*, for instance, published on

February 29 a Chemulpo message, which went to Weihaiwei by wireless telegraphy, stating that 'The Japanese disembarcations during the last few days have been confined to supplies, the transport corps, and ponies, of which there are 4,500. The total number of troops landed is 20,000, including the Twelfth Division and part of the Second Division. . . . Another disembarcation, believed to be on a small scale, is taking place on the coast immediately south of Haiju, whence the troops will advance parallel to the Peking road, . . . thus effecting a gain of five days' march. It is supposed that 8,000 troops, with a few guns, are now advancing beyond Seoul towards Pingyang.' And a great deal more of the same sort. If a correspondent does not send such things, he does not please the public at home. I knew a very active and able correspondent who was discharged for not wiring to America the capture of Pateros, a place near Manila. It had not been captured, but some paper published its capture with plenty of bloodshed, and it helped that paper to sell, so the rival paper had no option but to get rid of the man who had less enterprise.

In all fights it is of the utmost value to each party to have an idea what the other intends. The first rule in boxing is 'Watch his eye,' to divine where he means to aim, instead of waiting till the blow is falling or has struck home. There is a good deal of deer-stalking tactics about modern warfare; the slightest thing may spoil a cleverly planned surprise movement. The Japanese themselves are so keen at observing everything, and they have such an excellent Intelligence Department, that they realize how much use can be made of any item of information; and knowing

what service is rendered to them by their own newspaper correspondents in China and elsewhere, they have, perhaps, an exaggerated idea of the use that Russia might make of foreign war correspondents. Japanese newspaper correspondents were going all over Manchuria just before the war, and after the war began several foreign correspondents in Korea were known to be sending despatches to Chefoo by means independent of the Japanese post-office, the ordinary channel. This could only mean that they were sending out information which they knew the Japanese would not want to let out. All such information may be meant in the most innocent way, merely for the edification of the 'man in the street' in London or elsewhere; but St. Petersburg, of course, has its Intelligence Department, too, and was collecting every clipping that might be of use, and wiring out all possible data to the commanding officers at the front. A newspaper triumph might wreck an empire.

There is a vast amount of information to be obtained in legitimate ways by anyone who takes the trouble to note some of the things that all may see. When a trainload of soldiers comes from Sendai to Tokyo, any person living in Tokyo can see; and the same in Newchwang. A man can be a perfectly honest shopkeeper, and still write these things in letters to his friends at home. That is not spying. There is a totally different branch of the Intelligence Department, which depends on disguises and bribes and traitors in confidential offices. The extent to which this is carried in some countries can hardly be appreciated in England or America, because there is so little to conceal that there is small scope for spying.

We make public every detail about our ships, afloat and building, and every movement of troops, both in peace and war. But other countries are not so free with the information, and so spies are everywhere. Then it becomes necessary to set spies to trap other spies, and so it goes on, until suspicion necessarily falls on everyone, and the innocent have to suffer. A European tourist goes about Japan, enjoying a holiday and taking photographs of pretty bits of scenery as souvenirs. He may be the most innocent person in the world, but the Japanese authorities know well that, by some means or other, the Russian Government has got photographs showing the approaches to forts and other important things in Japan, and is determined to get further photographs, and will never cease trying. Therefore, the more innocent a tourist may be, the more he needs watching, from Japan's point of view. It is not only foreigners who do spying; they are rather too easily detected; and so it is best, when possible, to induce some Japanese to do the work.

It seems strange at first sight that such an intensely patriotic people as the Japanese should ever be capable of selling to an enemy the secrets of their national defence; but of course they have their black sheep too. One such fell into a very neatly devised trap. He had been brought up in the Russian Orthodox Church Mission in Tokyo, and had been for a time engaged in the service of the church. Then he got employment as interpreter in the Russian Legation, and was asked to obtain information of Japanese naval and military matters. He translated from Japanese newspapers every item of this sort that was published, and all his notes were carefully filed and copies were

sent to Russia. But, besides these published items, he was asked to get at secrets, somehow, and he spoke to a friend who was in the Naval Headquarters office. The naval man privately informed his superior officer, and between them they made up a large amount of most valuable confidential information, all lies, and palmed it off on Takahashi, the interpreter at the Russian Legation. He took it all as genuine, and passed it on to his master, who paid handsomely and forwarded to Russia some important fictions about stocks of coal, movements of ships, re-armament of old vessels, mechanism of new guns, construction of dockyards, plans of strategic roads in the vicinity of Yokosuka naval depot, and so on. The facts all came out when the war began ; the authorities had only waited for that. If peace had been preserved, the Navy Department would have continued putting bogus secrets in Takahashi's hands, and he would have continued selling them as real. But on February 7 the comedy ended in the arrest of the interpreter, and he was tried and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

There were several other cases that came to light, and in nearly all it was found that the Orthodox Church had first drawn the Japanese into its fold in their youth, and they had afterwards been won over to the service of Russia. In Hakodate eight or ten Japanese were proved to be implicated in the same sort of business.

There was, after all, no great secret about the plan of campaign. It was mainly a plan of acting according to events as they came. From Port Arthur to Vladivostok Russia had a great length of front, about 600 miles, and almost any part of this front might be

attacked. Part of the Korean frontier may be considered impracticable for military operations on account of the high mountains—Changpai Shan, sometimes called the Korean Alps, with Paiktu Shan, the Ever-White Mountain, crowning the range. But from the mountains to the sea, where Korea borders on Liaotung, there is a fairly gradual descent of over 100 miles, and the Japanese might make an attack at almost any point they liked there. Further, the whole Liaotung coast affords landing-places, mostly not good, but fairly practicable, at almost any point, and that means along a coast-line of over 200 miles, from the Yalu to Newchwang.

The Japanese plan was simply to threaten at as many points as possible, so as to make the Russians divide for defence, and then the Japanese could concentrate swiftly at any one point. It did not greatly matter which point they selected. At any point Japan could put quickly an overwhelming number of troops before Russia could move up reinforcements; and as fast as the Russians might try to concentrate in any given direction, the Japanese could at once have everything their own way in the opposite direction. If a strong force tried to oppose the passage of the Yalu at Antung, there could not be another strong force at Changhsieng, thirty miles further up the river; and another at Piektong, twenty miles above that; and another at Chosan, thirty-five miles further again. Even if all these points had been guarded, then Tatungkow, twenty miles below Antung, would be left weakly defended or not at all; and Takushan, thirty-five miles along the coast, and Hayuenkow, thirty miles further, and so on, all the way round the

coast. Japan could throw on each place a larger force than Russia could possibly have there. And so, if the Russians could not stand against a superior number of Japanese, they could never win this war, for Japan could keep up the outnumbering and outflanking tactics just as long and as far as her great advantage in communications could be maintained, and she need go no further than convenient. She could always have the advantage within easy striking distance of the sea, since Russia's sea-power was broken.

But all depended on the actual fighting power of the armies. If Japanese generals could be outmanœuvred by Russian, and if Japanese troops could not hold their own against Russian, then the advantages of communication and numbers would not avail. If Russian military science was further advanced than Japanese, and their explosives more highly developed, and their guns more up-to-date, then the European would beat the Asiatic as he always had done, despite heavy odds of numbers and position.

This explains how it was that some of the Russian generals said it was hopeless to fight anywhere near the sea, and would be a great mistake to try, while others said it was best to give battle at the first good opportunity. Divided counsels are usually ruinous; indecision in emergency always has been a characteristic weakness of Russia.

CHAPTER XIV

OPERATIONS IN KOREA

All the rivers of Northern Korea were frozen over when the war began, and so they were no obstacle. At other times they would be, for there are hardly any bridges in Korea; the people are in such a primitive stage of development that any stream too wide to be crossed by means of a plank is only negotiated by fords and ferries, and these at rare intervals. But now it was easy for bands of Cossack scouts to roam all over the country, and they made the most of their opportunities. They did not trouble much about commissariat; when they came to a village they would take whatever food they could find for themselves and their sturdy, well-built Manchurian ponies. Nor were they troubled about keeping open a line of communications; they trusted to luck for their chance of getting back, and as long as the Japanese did not come, there was no danger. So the scouting parties roamed as far south as Pingyang, and were even reported halfway between that place and Seoul. The whole distance is about seventy miles, and mounted men can do it comfortably in a couple of days.

The Koreans all got as excited as a lot of hens in a farmyard when stray dogs rush in. At one moment they were in a flutter over the sudden invasion of their

capital by the Japanese, and feared the worst. The next moment they feared worse than that, on account of the Russians coming down from the north. When six Cossacks rode into Koksan, just south of Pingyang, and began to order the Koreans about, correcting the national slowness and dulness with the boot, just as our English Tommy Atkinses 'never, never do,' except sometimes, at once the local magistrate sent a sensational telegram to Seoul that 60,000 Russians were close at hand, and would be seizing the Imperial Palace in a day or two. These wild yarns were partly due to the Koreans whom the Russians had brought with them as interpreters ; they delighted to draw the long-bow before their own countrymen, and make them tremble. For one thing, it helped to bring out more fowls, eggs, and other useful things, and it made the interpreters themselves appear the more important.

The Japanese knew the Koreans of old, and took little notice of them now. They knew that no important force of Russians had come into Korea, and they had their own men, Japanese made up as Koreans, all over the northern provinces, coming and going, bringing information every day and going back for more. One man was a Buddhist priest, collecting subscriptions for the repair of a shrine that never existed—but he was also collecting privately a few statistics of the Russian troops in North Korea. Another had a pedlar's pack on his shoulders, and was selling cheap penknives and tiny mirrors, brass pipe-bowls and rubbishy cigarettes. Between sales he made careful entries in his notebook ; presumably, he was adding up his accounts. If he did not quite speak the Pingyang dialect of Korea, it was because he came from Cholla

province; or if a Cholla-Do man found fault with his accent, it was because he had been so much in Ham-heung province. Why tell the truth when lies pass so easily?

There were Koreans employed by the Russians to come south and spy on the Japanese, and they mostly came to grief. A Korean is a willing liar, but unskilled, and easily found out. When a man is asked, 'Puk-toh mu-sam khi-pyul turuso?' ('What news from the north?') he ought not to answer in the broadest northern speech that he never was there in his life: 'Naiga ku gochi chumio.' To lie with diffidence is worse than to tell the truth.

There was one Korean with a bullock-load of charcoal, which he seemed to be trying to sell, but he never could get a purchaser to pay his price. As he wandered from village to village there was a blind Korean beggar who was keeping an eye on him, being not quite so blind as the charcoal hawker. And, by strange chance, the blind beggar wandered from village to village just wherever the bullock and his owner went. The reason was that the man with the animal had been sent out by the Russians from Wiju to see all he could about the Japanese, and the beggar was a Japanese, who had been in Wiju and tracked the other from the start. At length they came to Seoul, and quite accidentally the blind beggar collided with a Japanese gendarme. Both apologized, and a word or two of Japanese came from the supposed Korean beggar; the people passing by in the street did not notice, but the gendarme at once wanted to buy charcoal. The last of that Russian spy was that he went into a barrack-yard to sell his goods and look round.

JAPANESE TROOPS DETRAINING ON WIJU RAILWAY.

THE LAST OF THE COSSACKS IN KOREA.

TAKEN NEAR PINGYANG DURING THEIR LAST RAID.

After the spies, the scouts. Five hundred soldiers are sent forward, in fighting order, and these send out twenties and tens of their number in different directions, and each little party goes as far as it guesses it can pass unobserved by the enemy, and then sends forward one or two still further. If they come back, they can say whether there was anything to see or not; if they do not come back, then they have been killed, and it is useful to know.

The first encounter between Russian and Japanese troops was at the north gate of Pingyang, the ancient Korean capital, on Sunday, February 28, at 9 a.m. Cossack scouts had been reported further south, but they must have retired as the Japanese advanced, for a hundred Japanese entered Pingyang from Seoul without finding the enemy. Waiting at Pingyang for a strong force to come and occupy the city, these hundred sent out small parties scouting, and found that a body of mounted men—Cossacks—forty or fifty strong, had come within a mile of Pingyang and seemed disposed to enter. The Japanese mustered behind the city wall, inside the gate, and waited. The Russians halted in the middle of the road about 700 yards from the gate, and questioned some natives in cottages. This meant they would not come nearer, so the Japanese opened fire, and the Russians at once replied. Shooting went on for about ten minutes, and some of the Russians seemed to be hit, but they all got away.

About the same time the Russians reported that the Japanese had attempted to land troops near Kinchow, in Liaotung, and there had been a skirmish, in which the Japanese were driven away. This seems to have

been an error, for the Japanese authorities denied that there had been any such attempt. Probably the Russians had a fight with some of the Hunghutze, or Chinese mounted bandits, who infested the country, and were supposed to be instigated by the Japanese, and in some cases led by them. It is most likely that the only motive actuating the Hunghutze was a hatred of the Russians, and they were glad to take advantage of the war to get the Russians at a disadvantage. There was also at the end of February a report that a land mine had exploded at the Russian station at Hayuen-kow, on the south coast of Liaotung, between the Yalu and Port Arthur. The Russians had expected the Japanese would try to land here, as it was one of their principal landing-places in the war of 1894 against China; so the place was mined, and it was said that the Hunghutze attacked the Russians in force, and managed to blow up the mine, with a loss of 200 Russian soldiers. There were numerous other outbreaks of the Hunghutze, who seem to have carried on a sort of guerilla warfare against the Russians all the time.

While these preliminary skirmishes were going on, most of the towns and villages in Japan were sending their quota of troops to the front, and the whole land displayed bunting and echoed with 'Banzai!' from end to end. All the youth and strength of the country seemed to be going to the war, and in all the villages the old men and children, and the women with queer doll-like babies on their backs, turned out to watch the troop-trains go by all day long and far into the night. There is not much farm-work to do in February and March, and the country-people spent a good deal of

time alongside the railway-line, camping out in the fields and lighting bonfires in the chilly nights, so that there should be somebody present to cry 'Banzai!' and no regiment could pass uncheered at any hour. Every village and level-crossing was decorated with festoons of flags and paper lanterns on quite a lavish scale for such a frugal people, and the simple peasant-folk delighted to show their ingenuity in fashioning imitation warships out of evergreens and fortresses of paper. In the big towns the enthusiasm was more elaborate; when a regiment was tumbled out on the station platform, so that the men could stretch their legs for a minute while the engine took in water, often a deputation would arrive; the mayor and corporation of the town, dressed in nearly correct European style, would gravely present some small souvenir—a few baskets of oranges or boxes of cakes for the men on their tedious journey, or some such Spartan luxury—and with it, in half-a-dozen stammered and spluttered syllables, a wealth of feeling that was enough to overflow the heart and fill the eyes; then suddenly a roar of 'Nippon Teikoku Banzai!'—'Imperial Japan for ever!'—and the shout would be heard a mile or two across the town, and would penetrate into the little humble home, where the white-faced mother and crying children would echo it and try to smile.

All this brave show was the more touching when one remembered the obedience of it. Willing, only too eager, to show their devotion, these people wait till they are told they may. Paternalism goes so far here that a crowd usually does not say 'Hurrah!' until the policeman, or the mayor, or the village headman indicates that this is the psychological moment. The

banners are hung out joyfully, but not till the authorities give the word—not the wholesale decorations, though a few casual ones are ahead of the order. It is a spirit of obedience that we can hardly realize. The loyalty is real, the enthusiasm genuine, but a Japanese who would be proud and happy to die for his Emperor never dares cheer him when passing in the street, for it has not been permitted.

Just before I left Japan I saw at Tokyo railway-station two women, apparently mother and daughter, crying, and a small boy with them. He was crying, but stopped to stare at the foreigner. I asked: 'What makes you all cry, little man?' He managed to understand my Japanese, and said: 'Father just gone to war. Mother and sister crying for him.' 'Father cry too?' 'No, not a bit. He's a surly old beast, isn't he?'

The troopships were a miscellaneous lot. There were some ancient P. and O. liners, dropped out of the British mail service twelve or fifteen years ago, and bought by Japanese for the coast trade; some of the Ben and Shire lines, the Glen and the Holt 'blue funnel' steamers, a few German-built, and a good many that had never been anything but Japanese-owned, and some that were built in Japan, as good as any in the world. Some had British, American, and a few other foreign officers, but more had Japanese only. In all there was the usual arrangement for carrying large numbers of passengers; in the 'tween-decks the entire space was occupied by large shelves of plain wood—two or three tiers, according to the space available—and on these shelves simple reed-mats were laid for the men to sleep on, a rolled-up blanket at the

foot, and a bag of sawdust, the size of a man's head, as pillow at the other end. Each man had a space of 3 feet by 6 feet to hold himself and his kit. For soldiers there is no dining-saloon—Japanese habits of living do not need dining-rooms. A man just sits wherever he happens to be, and the food comes to him there. A wooden pail full of steaming boiled rice is brought round, and each man fills his bowl; a dish of something like pickled cabbage, another of fish, and another of broad beans, or some such things, go round, and each man takes with his chopsticks as much as would make a good big spoonful. The rice-bowl may be filled three times, but the small saucerful of other things is seldom replenished. Sometimes there is preserved beef, in half-pound tins, and there are several other variations when possible. But in camp this is about all they get.

It is often said that the Japanese diet would not be enough to keep a foreigner in health and strength. This is a mere superstition. We believe in meat mainly because meat has happened to be the diet of our ancestors from time immemorial, and they did not test all sorts of food and select the one that suited them, but they simply took what came handiest. The Tibetans eat practically nothing but meat, because the country grows nothing but pasture, and the meat diet has not made them a superior race. I have lived on Japanese food—soldier food—for weeks of the hardest kind of work, and it nourishes as well as anything. It does not make fat; a fat Japanese is a rarity. But it makes muscle, bone, sinew, blood, and fire and brain, as the Japanese have proved. There are no hardier soldiers in the world.

The officers on the transports occupy the cabins and take their meals in the saloon, with a little more elaborate menu than the soldiers, but only very little. In ten minutes it is all over, for there is nothing at all to eat for eating's sake. Most foreigners would call this ideal, in theory, but in practice we are usually slaves of habit, and cannot imagine the requirements of the body being satisfied without a tickling of the palate.

For the ship's officers and the pilot the voyage is a severe strain. It means intense anxiety, and vigilance carried to such an extreme that forty-eight hours of it without resting will sometimes drive a man into high fever. During the day the faintest suggestion of a wisp of smoke on the sky-line may be a sign of swift and violent death for all on board. In the night, black as ink, the same swift death may be approaching without even so much warning. Then what an anxious straining of eyes to pierce the gloom—to try and make out whether that thing off the starboard bow was only a crested wave or an oncoming messenger of destruction; whether that faint speck of light shorewards is from a fisherman's skiff, or a hut on the beach, or—or—is this the moment to 'bout ship and run, to nerve oneself to say good-bye for ever, and count the heart-beats till the crash comes to blow us all into eternity?

There is not very much anxiety in the Japanese character. The man who is responsible—yes, he is anxious to avoid failure in his mission. But the common soldier, and the coolie who left his jinricksha in Osaka and has come to pull a handcart laden with rice, these men know as well as anybody what the danger is, and they laugh. If they do happen to let

the conversation turn on the imminence of an awful fate, they sum up the whole matter in one word, 'Shikataganai'—'Cannot be helped.' And then they go on smoking their little brass tobacco-pipes, and discussing the *Kinshiu Maru* case as if it had been a billiard match or a game of whist, in which the loser might have played differently. The *Kinshiu* was a troopship that lost her escort of torpedo boats on a foggy night off the east coast of Korea, and when the fog lifted a little she was near the Russian vessels and mistook them for her protectors; then, refusing to surrender, the troops on board went down with the ship, sunk by a torpedo, and they fired their rifles at the Russians and shouted 'Banzai!' as the water rose over them. And these simple fellows on these other transports discuss the case, and speculate on their own possible annihilation, with a grim, semi-humorous philosophy which seems more than Socratic, for Socrates was one man in Greece, but this is of the whole race.

And as they discuss what to do if taken by surprise, one says: 'Fight the Russians on sight, and die fighting.' But the baggage coolies say, 'We have no guns,' and somebody says, 'Let them take us aboard their ships as prisoners, then let us cut loose with daggers and kill some of the Russians till we fall,' for every man has his own keen sheath-knife. (This trick of 'running amok' is almost as much Japanese as it is Malay.) Others argue that the Russians would not allow themselves to be tricked, and would disarm the prisoners and give no chance of a fight. Then the question is one of choosing a decorous death. But, says a thoughtful sergeant, such men as stretcher-

bearers, wearing the Red Cross badge, are in duty bound to abstain from fighting, or from carrying arms; then does not peaceful submission become a duty? A Red Cross man answers that, though bound not to kill others, there is nothing in the rules against killing himself if his country meets with defeat. Most men vote for the traditional death by disembowelling—'seppuku,' vulgarly called 'hara-kiri,' belly-ripping. Then they all agree that in this progressive age the rifle displaces the sword largely, so they discuss how a dignified and ceremonious 'seppuku' might be managed with an Arisaka magazine rifle. Finally, somebody who was in the siege of Peking tells what was agreed on in case the Boxers should win the day: 'Use every cartridge against the enemy till the last; use that for yourself.' This, it is agreed, is most in accordance with modern civilization; yet some say, 'The old way was better.'

And thus the time is passed on the voyage, mostly in discussing something of present importance; scarcely any time is taken up in games, as it would be with Westerners. When they read, it is not a novel, as a rule, but something that gives practical information. Almost every coolie has a little notebook, and when an island is sighted, one asks another, till all know its name, until the ship comes among the 'thousand islands,' and then it is hopeless, and a memo is made in the book: 'Islands beyond number.' If one man has been here before, and knows or tries to know all about the place, the rest gather round him and listen eagerly as he holds forth. They seem to have a craze for collecting knowledge; it compares forcibly with some of our fashionable crazes in the West. It helps

to explain how the Japanese came to know their antagonists better than anyone suspected.

I made one trip on the Red Cross steamer *Hakuai*, where there were about thirty female nurses, and here the comparison with a British or American troopship or hospital ship was even more marked. The whole atmosphere of the ship was one of seriousness, even severity. Some of the girls, out of uniform and free from the restraining sense of war duty, would be as pretty and as charming as the heart of man could desire, but a Quaker convention or a penitentiary could not have been more thoroughly earnest. The sea was rough for two days, and some of the girls could not help being ill, but not one would be off duty for a moment; they struggled through their daily drill, asking no sympathy or remission of task. And when off duty there was a total absence of all the nonsense which made British and American army officers in recent years protest against the 'plague of women in war.' There was no disposition on the part of officers or men to get chatting with the girls, apart from ordinary civilities; nor did the girls seem to expect any special attention, but they attended to their business as if it hardly ever occurred to them to think of anything else.

Every morning there was stretcher practice, and a grinning fo'c'stle hand had to come and be dead; two of the nurses carefully put him in a stretcher, and carried him the length of the deck, despite the sea motion, then down the stair without upsetting, and into a cot in the ward below. The cabins for passengers on the ordinary peace run of the steamer were no longer there in war; for a stretcher could not be taken

in and out of an ordinary cabin door. So the partitions were removed and an open ward was made. Here the nurses laid the sailor carefully on a cot and repeated the formulas for different kinds of wounds, with the correct treatment in each case, showing a fracture of the skull, a severed artery, and so on. The doctor stood by to put them right if they made a mistake; but they had it all pretty correct, and could put bandages on as quickly and neatly as the doctor himself. And in their off-duty hours, for amusement, they would have little quiet contests in a corner of the ship, to see which of them could tie three different bandages correctly in the shortest space of time. If one can only come to think so, this game has more in it than ping-pong.

Had the Russians in Northern Korea utilized their opportunities to get into the good graces of the natives, they could have greatly impeded the northward advance of the Japanese. Instead, they acted in an overbearing way that made the Koreans only too glad to help the Japanese. It is said by Russian officers with whom I have spoken about the conduct of their Cossack scouts that the true Cossacks of the Don and Volga regions are not at all rough in their treatment of non-combatants, but that there are large numbers of Siberian savages drafted into some of the regiments in the Far East—Buriats, Kalmucks, and other Tartar tribes—who undeniably commit many excesses when not under the close observation of responsible officers. At the same time, it must not be supposed that a regiment called the 15th East Siberian is composed of native tribes of East Siberia; not at all. The bulk of the troops come from Europe, and are formed into regiments here, with a minority of natives. The

system may be compared with our Rhodesian Horse, Kaffraria Rifles, and many other organizations, formed wholly or mainly of British-born men or colonial-born men of pure British blood.

The Cossacks retired as the Japanese advanced, and there was hardly anything that could be called fighting. The Northern Koreans are less pusillanimous than the Central and Southern people, and there is a curious sort of irregular fighting force called the 'Tiger Hunters,' a kind of militia, but without officers or organization of any sort. They do not hunt tigers very much, but they have rifles, and I suppose that is the origin of their name. These people gathered at some of the villages where the Cossacks had been seizing provisions and fodder without pay, and had outraged Korean women, and though there was never anything which could be called a battle, the 'Tiger Hunters' fired from long range into the native huts where the Cossacks had installed themselves, and in other ways made the Cossacks realize that the country was against them. Hence the Russian retreat was so steady that the Japanese, all impatient to have a dash at them, could hardly catch up.

Campaigning in winter is not specially difficult in Korea; there is little snow, and the roads are frozen hard. The weather is about as cold as in the North of England, but the air is fine and dry, without the horrid dust storms of North China. The Japanese were well clad for the coldest weather, with thick brown overcoats, sheepskin-lined at the collars, and thick woollen felt gloves. They got over the country without difficulty, but of course they had to take all precautions —never advance too far on one road without finding

out about other roads in the vicinity being clear of the enemy, and so on. Most of the Japanese were infantry; they had a few cavalry doing vedette duty.

After the brush between the scouts at Pingyang on February 28, which would hardly be worth recording except that it was the first exchange of shots on land, there was no meeting until the end of March. On the 23rd the scouts of the two armies found each other at a bridge over a river near Pakchyon, forty miles north of Pingyang. The Japanese had moved into the town in considerable force—that is to say, several hundreds—and sent small parties out in different directions ahead. One of these parties sighted a squad of fifty Cossacks across the river, and showed themselves, firing a few shots, hoping to draw the enemy in pursuit. The Russians followed, firing, until within a quarter of a mile of Pakchyon, and then noticed that, away to the right and left, Japanese were streaming out of the town, trying to encircle them unperceived. The Cossacks at once rode off, with the Japanese infantry trying their best to run after them; but in heavy winter coats and full field kit one cannot expect to run as fast as a horse. There were five Japanese killed out of about 600 engaged, and about fifteen Russians were seen to fall, but were picked up and carried off by their comrades, only two being left dead on the field.

Five days later (March 28) there was a bigger fight at Chongju, ten miles west of Pakchyon, and nearer the sea. A Japanese captain of cavalry and two troopers went from Pakchyon to reconnoitre Chongju, taking a road which leads to the south gate of the city, and a similar reconnaissance was made along the north

road into the city. Both parties were seen by Russian scouts who were also approaching the city from their camp ten miles further west; and though the Japanese had instructions only to see and hurry back with their report, they said: 'We can give a fuller report if we try a little fighting first; we have never had a chance yet!' So one man was sent back, and he brought up thirty Japanese at the double to a little hill just outside the south gate. The Russians were over 200 strong, with 500 more a half-mile behind, coming to aid. The firing on both sides grew fast and furious, when more Japanese infantry came up, with about fifty cavalry, and, circling away to the left, got the Russians between cross-fires. One thing that hampered the movements of both sides was that there had been a good deal of snow two days before, and it had crusted with the alternations of bright sun and freezing night, and the Japanese only had time to get a few men round to outflank the Russians when they saw the enemy retreating, carrying away many killed and wounded. Two or three were left on the field. The Japanese had altogether five killed and twelve wounded.

Skirmishes of this sort occurred at several other places with queer names, until the Russians withdrew over the Korean border, and took up a position on the north bank of the Yalu River. By April 10 no Russian force remained south of the river, but occasional scouting parties came over to see what the Japanese were doing. The Japanese were landing large numbers of troops at Chinnampo, a desolate little place near the mouth of the Tatung River, Pingyang being some forty miles up the river. The river at Chinnampo forms a wide estuary, an excellent

harbour, sheltered by rugged, desolate-looking granite hills on both sides. Landing was begun there in March, while ice still covered the upper river and hung about corners of the lower reaches. As the Russians retired, General Kuroki, who commanded the Japanese, moved all his forces up to the Yalu, not treading too fast on the heels of the Russians, nor letting them feel his strength. It was enough for him that they were going, and that he had information about their positions along the Yalu.

On April 10 the Japanese navy and army co-operated in a little scouting on the river in boats. Lieutenant Yamaguchi, with five bluejackets, got into a Korean fishing junk at Yongampo, and crossed to the Russian side. They did not show their naval caps and uniforms, though they were not disguised as Korean fishermen. At two or three places they put the boat in to the bank, crept ashore among clumps of leafless willows, and cautiously proceeded a little way inland, looking about for any signs of the Russians, and taking note of the lie of the land for fighting purposes. Then into the boat again, and away they went a half-mile further up the river and ashore again for a look round. So they kept on until late in the afternoon, when they saw another Korean fishing junk putting off shore with some Russian soldiers in it. Other Russians were in a village near by, and Yamaguchi and his men at once embarked, and pushed out into the stream. Soon there was a pitched battle raging on the water, the two boats keeping about 500 yards apart, and firing hard. Then another boat appeared, with ten more Russians, and a party of Japanese soldiers appeared on the opposite

bank, then more and more, until there were about a hundred engaged on each side. There was no knowing how the firing took effect, however, and soon darkness came on, and the scouting parties returned to report.

At another time the same officer, Lieutenant Yamaguchi, made himself up as a Korean boatman in order to find out whether there was any truth in a report brought by spies from the Russian camp, that explosive mines were laid in the river. The river is full of long, narrow islands, making quite a delta, and the Lieutenant and a couple of men wandered about among these islands, 'making-believe' that they were simple villagers catching fish. They had grapnels and poles, and examined all likely spots for over a week, right under the enemy's eyes, and were never suspected. Sometimes the enemy bought their fish!

Another thing had to be investigated about the same time. The St. Petersburg newspapers had published a story that the army authorities had sent to the Yalu appliances and material for covering the river with burning oil in case of an attempt to cross. As events proved, there was nothing in the story; still, no precaution could be overlooked.

CHAPTER XV

FACE TO FACE ON THE YALU

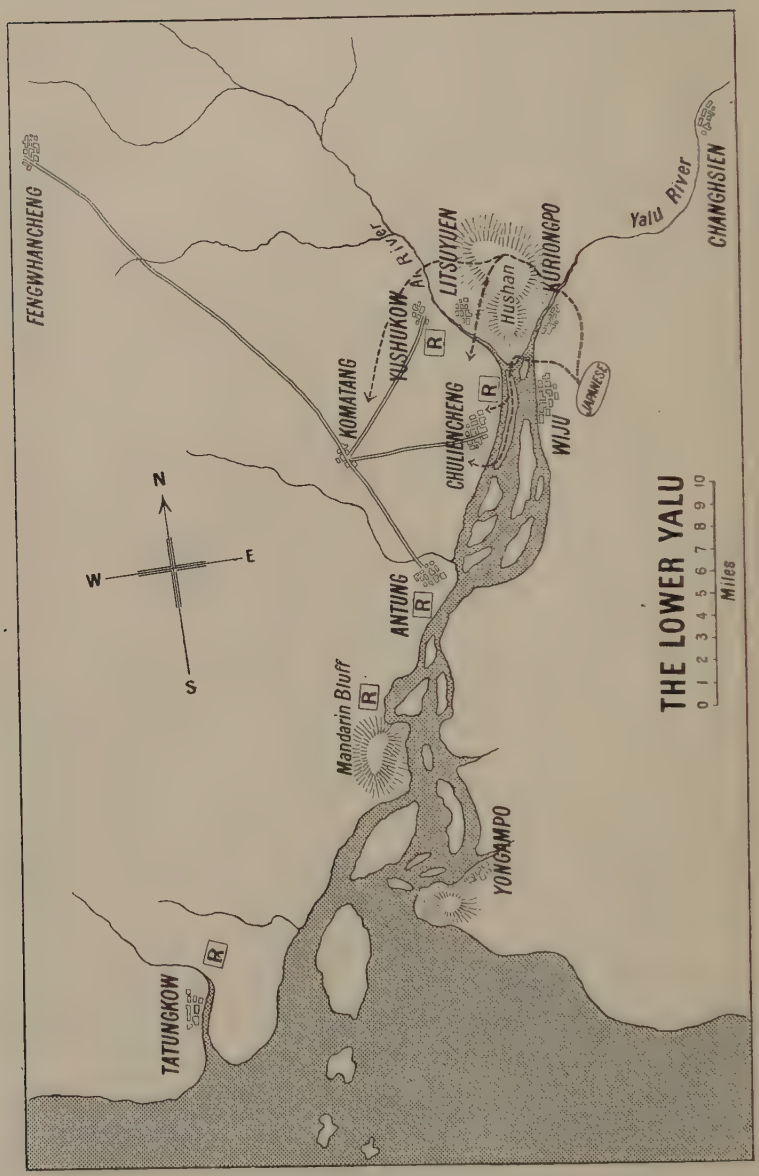
THE Yalu is a very broad, shallow, wandering river, full of mud-flats which sometimes grow into big islands. From about Wiju down to the sea it is, in fact, several rivers, with intervening stretches of land on which villages have plenty of room to grow. The river and the islands change immensely according to the tides and the rains. From the highest to the lowest water-mark is about thirty feet—for the summer sun degrades the great stream to the rank of a rivulet, while the melting of winter's snows about April swells it to a great flood, and the high tides that come with full moon make a 12-feet rise at Wiju. Then, there is a vast stretch of water between the islands and the mainland, and the middle stream is a waterway fit for ocean steamers of moderate size. At other times, the three or four branches of the Yalu dwindle to mere driblets between great mud-banks, with the land high above water, and only small boats can navigate the tangle of meandering loops and back reaches, obstructed in all directions by slimy mud ridges, like the backs of stranded whales. Opposite Wiju there is a clear stretch of open water over a mile wide, and at some points nearly two miles. Just below Wiju the river divides, and the chain of islands is con-

JAPANESE MILITARY ENGINEERS AND KOREAN COOLIES WORKING TOGETHER ON WIJU RAILWAY.

GENERAL YAMANE, IN CHARGE OF CONSTRUCTION OF WIJU RAILWAY.

tinuous nearly down to Tatungkow, where the open sea is. Just above Wiju, the Yalu is joined by a large stream coming from the heart of Manchuria, named the Ai. The country is about as hilly as the Cumberland Lake region until below the junction of the Ai with the Yalu. Then there is a broad, open stretch of undulating land, low rounded hillocks and wide, level meadows and cornfields, with villages so numerous and straggling that they nearly run into each other. This low land is about five or six miles wide in any direction, and is intersected by numerous small streams as well as the great Yalu.

Wiju city is on a piece of rising ground close to the river; there is a riverside suburb outside the city walls, and the whole place extends for about two miles along the river bank, the highest part of Wiju being perhaps a hundred feet above the average river level. Chuliencheng is about two miles back from the river, opposite Wiju, and is built on a series of hillocks, from which it takes its name, meaning 'Nine connected forts.' Gradually the rounded knolls get higher as one goes further from the river, till there is a semicircle of ridges and crests about a thousand feet high, with passes between them not less than half as high, leading over to Fengwhancheng and Liaoyang. The Ai cuts its way through these rough crags, and its banks are rocky bluffs until near the junction with the Yalu. Below Chuliencheng, on the Manchurian side, the hills fall away gradually till there is a ten or fifteen mile stretch of flats towards Tatungkow, with only an occasional hillock. On the Korean side, from Wiju to the sea, there is a gently undulating country, with less dead flat than on the north side. Yongampo is at the


FENGWHANCHENG
KOMATANG
KUSHUKOW
Yalu River
LITSUYUEN
Hushan
KURIONGPO
Yalu River
CHANGHSIEN
CHULIENCHENG
WIJU
HWANGKOU
ANTUNG
Mandarin Bluff
YONGAMPO
TATUNGKOW
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THE LOWER YALU
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Miles

mouth of the river, just opposite Tatungkow; from there to Antung (otherwise called Shaho) is about twenty miles, and from Antung to Wiju is eight. The fork of the Ai and Yalu is two miles above Wiju. The point of land between the two rivers consists of sand flats for a little distance, cultivated and partly wooded, with a tiny village or two close to the water and clumps of willow everywhere; and behind this level belt there rises rather steeply a big mass of hill with a nearly flat top, partly covered with big old pine-woods.

The depth of the river hereabouts varies greatly; and in this fact, and the intimate understanding of it, lay part of the secret of Japan's success. To the Russians the river was strange, and their knowledge was vague, derived from imperfectly understood native information. The Japanese knew just where they could wade, where they could pole boats over, and where a pole would not touch bottom; where a vessel of 10-feet draught could cruise safely, and where only 5 feet could be counted on. Moreover, they knew the roads and footpaths from village to village, the hillside tracks and short cuts; they knew where Russian troops were posted in strong bodies, where only few, and where none. In September, 1894, they had a dress-rehearsal of the whole battle of the Yalu.

This was where the superiority of the Japanese information counted for so much. Their scouting hopelessly outclassed the Russian at every point, and so they could play with their antagonists as a cat plays with a mouse, or an angler with a trout. Possibly the trout may escape, but at most he can never catch the angler. It would have made all the difference if the

Russians could have known where the Japanese were going to cross the water, but they seem to have been completely in the dark. The principal Russian position was close to the river, above Chuliencheng, at the junction of the Ai with the Yalu. There is a bold promontory, called Tiger's Head Hill. It is no more like a tiger's head than any of the hundreds of other Tiger Hills throughout China, but the name is popular. This hill has many aliases, in Mandarin Chinese, local Chinese, Korean, and Japanese; but they all mean the same thing. This place the Russians had fortified with two earth redoubts, each having four batteries of eight guns, making sixty-four altogether. One of these forts was on a spur immediately overlooking the river, and the other on a higher ridge, further back, towards Chuliencheng. These guns could, if desired, demolish the whole town of Wiju, and sweep the broad bosom of the river and the sprawling islands for two or three miles up and down.

Near Antung, seven miles down the river, there was another Russian fort, and all the country between was entrenched, and guarded by strong infantry detachments. Chuliencheng itself was the centre of the Russian position, but the troops were spread out over such a wide area along the river-bank that there could not be many at the central point. There were said to be over 50,000 troops guarding the Yalu, but there were probably about half of that number in the battle. There were 5,000 at Antung who never got a chance to take part, 1,000 at Tatungkow and vicinity, and parties of twenty, fifty, and a hundred at short intervals all the way for thirty or forty miles up the Yalu and down the coast as far as Takushan.

It is a fundamental weakness of defensive tactics that the defenders have to spread out, and so weaken themselves, unless they are superior in mobility and information, as the Boers were at the Modder and the Tugela. To spread out is only good when one is certain of being able to concentrate quickly at the right time. That is exactly what General Kuroki did during the ten days before the big battle. One day he would make a reconnaissance below Antung, and draw the Russians to defend that point; and as soon as that alarm had passed, there would be an appearance of an attempt to cross the river at Wiju. The Russians made little or no use of the telegraph or telephone between the different posts along the bank of the Yalu. Cossack aides-de-camp would chase up and down the lines at breakneck speed, getting the men together at a given point for a determined resistance, and working the whole army up to a fever-heat of expectation—and a considerable degree of exhaustion, with the running hither and thither. And when the reinforcements had hurried to the scene of action, there was no action; the Japanese had 'been repulsed,' as the Russians supposed, but really they had just done what they wanted—given the enemy a false alarm. It way a merry game to 'keep them guessing.'

Early in April, when the Russians cleared out of Wiju and began entrenching on the opposite bank, they put outposts on all the islands of the delta. When the Japanese came, these islands were turned into a sort of 'happy hunting ground,' where the opposing scouts played hide-and-seek in deadly earnest, and every day there were two or three men killed of each army. Gradually the Japanese got

possession of most of the islands, and established themselves in the villages there. On April 21 the Russians made a reconnaissance in considerable force among the islands. Several dozens of junks were found at Antung, and at daylight these were seen full of Russians, coming across the central stream. It was a rash thing to do, for they were not strong enough to resist a serious attack, and they were putting themselves in an awkward position for retreat. The Japanese very cleverly refrained from showing themselves or offering any opposition to the move, until the enemy had landed on a long, narrow island below Wiju, named Chinting. It was easy to count the boat-loads, and accordingly a force of Japanese about three times as strong did a quick march along a road out of sight of the Russians, and crossed a shallow stream to another island, thence to the one where the junks had touched, and soon the Russians found themselves between cross-fires of musketry. They could not see where to reply, and there was nothing for it but to scramble into the junks again, amid a hail of bullets, and scull away to the northern shore as fast as the boats could be driven. During the re-embarkation, of course, the Russians could only do a little firing, but when they had got a little way off-shore they replied energetically to the Japanese, who, however, were keeping themselves well out of sight. About twenty dead Russians were found on the island, and there must have been as many more that were hit, and were got aboard by their comrades. It may have been the intention of the Russians merely to draw the Japanese a little, so as to test their strength, but if so it was a very costly way, and rather unintelligent. It

is difficult to understand what else could have been their object.

As the boats cleared away, the Russian cannon on Tiger's Head Hill boomed sullenly, and a few shells came flying through the trees on the island. They did no harm, and the Japanese artillery in and about Wiju did not reply.

On April 24 the Japanese infantry began going about the many little streams of the delta in small boats, parties of five or six at a time going cautiously from island to island scouting, while an armed steam-launch from one of the warships came up the river to reconnoitre and take soundings in the channel. She found in two or three places Russian outposts on the river bank, among clumps of willow or in occupation of native huts. A few shots were exchanged, and it was found, first, that the whole riverside was dotted with Russian outposts in small force, and, secondly, that the river was deep enough for gunboats to come a good way up—at any rate, past Antung. Accordingly, on the next day the small gunboat *Maya* entered the Yalu, and steamed slowly up-stream, keeping as near the Russian side of the river as she could get. Near Tatungkow she was fired on by some Russian artillery, but was not hit. A little further up she was sighted by a squad of Cossack cavalry, about 100 strong. They galloped off as soon as the *Maya* turned her machine guns on them. After this there were several other boats sent into the river—the gunboat *Uji*, sister ship to the *Maya*, and two torpedo-boats, besides a couple of steam pinnaces from the big ships.

Three soldiers attempted to swim the river to do some scouting above Wiju on the night of the 23rd.

The water was so cold that one man took cramp, and was drowned. The other two were known to have got across, but never came back, and it is uncertain whether they also were swept away by the current or were seized by the Russians.

In the early morning of the 26th, before daylight, a force of about 250 Japanese crossed the Yalu above Wiju, in eleven pontoon boats, which had been put together by the engineers in Wiju. Their destination was an island called Chuli, nearly a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, at the junction of the Ai with the Yalu. When the first three boats had only just reached the island, a shot rang out from a hamlet in the middle of Chuli, and at once a force of about 150 Russians commenced firing. Without waiting for the other boats, the little band of sixty or seventy advanced in the direction from which the shots came. They were again fired on, and twelve of their number fell. Still the Japanese advanced, and soon the other boats arrived, and the whole force attacked the Russian trenches impetuously, chanting one of their war-songs as they charged. The Russians retired in haste, scrambled into boats, and crossed the river, but were not able to carry away all their wounded, and three of them were taken by the Japanese and sent to the field hospital.

As the Russians retired they lighted a signal fire, consisting of a tall pole swathed in pine brush to the thickness of a foot. It flared up magnificently in the darkness, and was in a few minutes answered by similar beacon fires from two other places on Chuli Island and three points on the mainland. Chuli village also was set on fire, and as soon as the Russians

JAPANESE BRINGING STEEL PONTOON SECTIONS, TO BRIDGE THE YALU RIVER.

THE CURIOUS WOODEN HEAD IS A MILE-POST.

had got away there was a heavy fusillade from various points, aimed all round the burning village. The Japanese had altogether nine killed and thirty-two wounded in this affair. It ended, however, in the place being made an outpost of the Japanese army, with trenches where the men were safe from Russian fire, and preparations were made for the next step, the crossing to the mainland.

Later in the day there was a feint attack on the front of the Russian position at Chuliencheng, and the Japanese began mooring native boats side by side out into the stream, as if they intended to make a floating bridge at that point. The Russians resisted with might and main, and meanwhile there were two other Japanese bridges being constructed, one nine miles higher up the river, and the other five miles further down. By way of additionally diverting the enemy's attention from the business in hand, the flotilla of six little vessels appeared just below Antung, and cruised slowly along the shore, dropping shells about the Russian trenches, and using machine guns whenever the Cossacks showed themselves. This looked so threatening that the Russians at that part of the Yalu were convinced the main attack was to come there, and sent up to Chuliencheng for reinforcements. Between these different alarms the Russians were entirely at a loss to know where the blow would fall, and they could only wait, while the Japanese were completing their preparations to throw an overwhelming force upon whatever part of the line they found best.

For a long time General Kuroki had been waiting for his heaviest guns to be brought up from Chinnampo. In the old days it was never thought neces-

sary or possible to move very large guns about in a campaign—the difficulty of getting them over bad ground, and the risk of having them taken by surprise, was considered too great. But the Boers with their 'Long Toms' changed the whole theory of field artillery, and when Captain Percy Scott put 4·7-inch naval guns on carriages which he specially designed for the march up-country to Ladysmith, he established a record which the Japanese military attachés in South Africa very diligently studied. The Japanese had had full information about the Russian artillery, and had taken care to get guns of higher power and longer range. But the Japanese teamsters did not know how to drive, and they had only small ponies of little strength. The roads were in such a condition that one wished there was some other word than road. Perhaps 'Pilgrim's Progresses' would correctly define them. Even men who understand horses, and know how to get a team to pull all together with a resolute 'jump,' would have had a hard task, but ignorant coolies, whose only idea is to hammer each horse in turn without reason, only made matters worse on these wild tracks of Northern Korea.

At last, somehow, everything arrived at the Yalu, and the crossing began in earnest. It happened that an abundance of Korean and Chinese river junks could be obtained, as these rivers carry a great deal of traffic in the season, and the Russians had not taken the trouble to denude the southern shore of boats. But in case they had, the Japanese carried with them, on the shoulders of sturdy coolies, sections of pontoons, each piece weighing less than 100 pounds, and all ready to be quickly put together, and formed into either

ferry-boats or floating bridges. It was decided not to use these for such work as would be likely to draw the fire of the Russians, but to use the local supply of native boats for that, and save these section boats. They were made of thin sheet-steel, such as is used commonly for the lifeboats of ocean liners.

By keeping up a sort of 'pin-prick' attack all along the line for several days, General Kuroki in the first place tired the Russians a good deal, for many of them had trudged by forced marches from Haicheng and Port Arthur, and were in poor condition; and, in the second place, he found the weakest spots in the line. From the sea all the way up to Chuliencheng was fairly well guarded, but above the point where the Ai River joined the main stream there were only small outposts on the Yalu itself, and a strong force guarding the Chuliencheng side of the Ai for three miles up its course. Higher up, the Russians seemed to think the hilly nature of the country would prevent any serious move to outflank them, and as they had not troops enough to guard strongly everywhere, they devoted their attention to the part they thought most likely—the lower Yalu.

General Kuroki, therefore, sent two or three reconnoitring parties over the Yalu above the Ai junction, and after a few skirmishes with Cossack outposts he sent a whole battalion across. The battalion was preceded by scouts, to make sure that the enemy's force had not been increased since the last information; and the scouts adopted the simple expedient of stripping all their clothes off, and swimming or wading up to the chin, carrying only rifle and cartridge pouch. Clothes do not greatly matter when there is work to be done, and

wet clothes are a terrible drag; it is cold without anything, but still colder with wet clothes.

After the battalion, a whole division went across, when no Russians remained to see. There is a peninsula coming down between the Ai and the Yalu, with a dome-shaped hill called Hushan at its point, and a small town called Litsuyuen about three miles up the Ai bank. Nine miles above Wiju, on the Korean side of the Yalu, is the large village of Sheungkong, and it was here that the whole of the Twelfth Division went over by means of the steel pontoon bridge. The Russians had been driven away from Hushan and Litsuyuen by the battalion, and had crossed the Ai to the vicinity of Chuliencheng. The Twelfth Division marched across on April 28, and during the 29th the regiments were moved into suitable positions in the neighbourhood of Litsuyuen, and higher up the Ai, far beyond the Russian lines on the opposite bank. This was the move that won the battle.

During the 29th also the Japanese Imperial Guards regiment, with the heaviest of the artillery, took up positions on the island of Chuli, off the point of Hushan Peninsula, and facing Chuliencheng, where the central Russian force was. The island is low and nearly flat, but there are many little ridges and dips of a few feet —enough to afford cover. The river-bank on the Russian side is rather steep, and further up, along the Ai, very steep. The Ai was believed by the Russians to be too deep for wading, and as there was no sign of any bridge or boats in that direction, they never expected attack there. Their position was not unlike that of the Heights of Abraham at Quebec.

On the morning of the 30th, as soon as the thick mists cleared away, the Japanese commenced a heavy bombardment of all the Russian positions, showering shrapnel in every part so thickly that it was quite impossible for the Russian troops to move about, or to do anything but crouch in their trenches, contenting themselves with the reflection that they were not being much hit. But the Japanese were not wanting to hit so much as to keep the Russians in cover while more bridges were being rushed into position at three points a little below Wiju. Between Chuli Island and Chulien-cheng is a much larger island, Sungkiang, two or three miles long. The Japanese easily crossed to the lower part of this island unobserved by the Russians, and were then in position to make a rush for the mainland opposite as soon as the word was given. The Russians were trying to reply to the Japanese artillery fire, but had great difficulty in locating the batteries, as the Japanese used quite smokeless powder, and the guns were firing from behind low ridges. Many of the Russian shells dropped right into the town of Wiju and wrecked two or three miserable native huts, but almost all the Japanese by this time were halfway across from Wiju to the Russian side, and were making their way along from point to point wherever they could get forward unseen.

The Russians had an idea, however, that something might be going on in the delta region from which their outposts had been driven in during the last few days, so they kept up a desultory bombardment, 'searching' the islands from their Tiger's Head batteries and from the neighbourhood of Antung. But from the hills it is impossible to see much of what is

going on. All that can be seen is a great stretch of nearly level land, with several streams zigzagging all over it, crossing each other and cutting up the land into fantastically-shaped sections, with one stream rather wider than the others; and on the sections of land there are fields, trees, bushes, ditches, mounds and hollows, villages and farm-houses, and occasionally one may make out tiny dots like ants moving about among these various obstructions; and if a few shots are fired at a given point, these tiny dots disappear, but whether they continue moving about out of sight or take refuge the gunner on the hill cannot see, even with a telescope. The Japanese attain remarkable precision at long-range bombardment, and though it was quite impossible to see any of the slaughter usually depicted in battle scenes of the old style—men struck down right and left and falling in horrible agony with martyred expressions on their faces—yet it was significant that when the Japanese guns played on any point for fifteen or twenty minutes the Russian fire ceased. The Russian gunpowder is not quite smokeless, though less smoky than the old-fashioned black powder.

In the main, that is about all there is to see in a modern battle, unless one happens to be quite close to the actual target where the hits take place. On the Japanese side in this long-range fighting of April 30 there were only two men killed and about thirty wounded, out of forty or fifty thousand spread over fifteen miles of riverside. The heavy firing lasted from half-past ten in the morning till half-past one in the afternoon, and after that there was only an occasional shell, perhaps averaging once in twenty minutes. And thus passed the last day of April.

As daylight disappeared there was increasing activity on the Japanese side. The whole army was moving forward along the little roadways and paths from village to village across the islands—wading the smaller streams, and getting up to the middle in mud; crossing the larger streams by boat-bridges hastily pushed together after dark—and before midnight the Japanese army was well established on the Russian shore, and was silently creeping into position for a grand assault on the whole series of Russian defences at daylight. It is a weird and exciting thing, this stealthy midnight manœuvring right under the nose of the unsuspecting foe. A stumble, a gun going off by accident, might ruin everything. It is not easy to make one's way about these slippery river-banks and rough pathways in the dark, but, slowly and carefully groping along, it was managed in perfect order. And how comforting it was to know fairly well where the enemy's sentries were and where there were none, and to feel pretty sure of not taking a wrong path in the dark, for if anyone blundered the enemy might at once see through the whole plan, and the result would be disastrous.

It was surprising that the entire Japanese army crossed the main stream of the Yalu practically without a shot being fired. There had been a general belief that the Russians would manage to get searchlights to bear on the most important points, and would be on the alert to concentrate an overpowering force around any point where the first few Japanese got over, before they could make their position secure. A hot battle at midnight, half in and half out of a swift-running river, or in sluggish, swampy backwaters, with bog-holes and quicksands to stumble and flounder into

in the dark, with guncotton mines exploding and Maxim guns playing, with searchlights dazzling the eyes and giving the enemy a clear mark, would have been terrible; but it would have had to be faced if the Russians had arranged it so. Japanese take all possible precautions, and make very complete preparations, but when the fight comes they face everything. They do not count on excuses or failure; there may be victory or there may be death, but there is no intermediate course.

Eating and sleeping had to be very secondary considerations that night. During the day all the men had been supplied with three days' rations, and they could eat when they had the chance. In an advance there is usually a good deal of waiting. The men had to march, wade, wait their turn at a plank bridge or shallow ford, help each other up a slippery bank, pass, in single file sometimes, through a willow copse, wait, climb, jump, mud-scramble, and march again, for about six hours, getting into position, 'lining out' in front of the long-extending Russian trenches. No light was allowed, nor a voice above an undertone; for the most part there were not roads to march on, but the men had to cross fields, grope in the gloom for strange paths, or struggle past obstructions where no path could be found, using dry watercourses as tracks till they led into pools, over stubbly cornfields, in and out among tenantless farm-buildings, up country lanes and hillside footpaths, each officer and 'non-com.' peering into the gloom, feeling his way to the appointed spot, consulting a rough sketch-plan, and drawing his men after him with an angry 'Hush!' at any sudden sound that might reach the enemy. This silent, stealthy

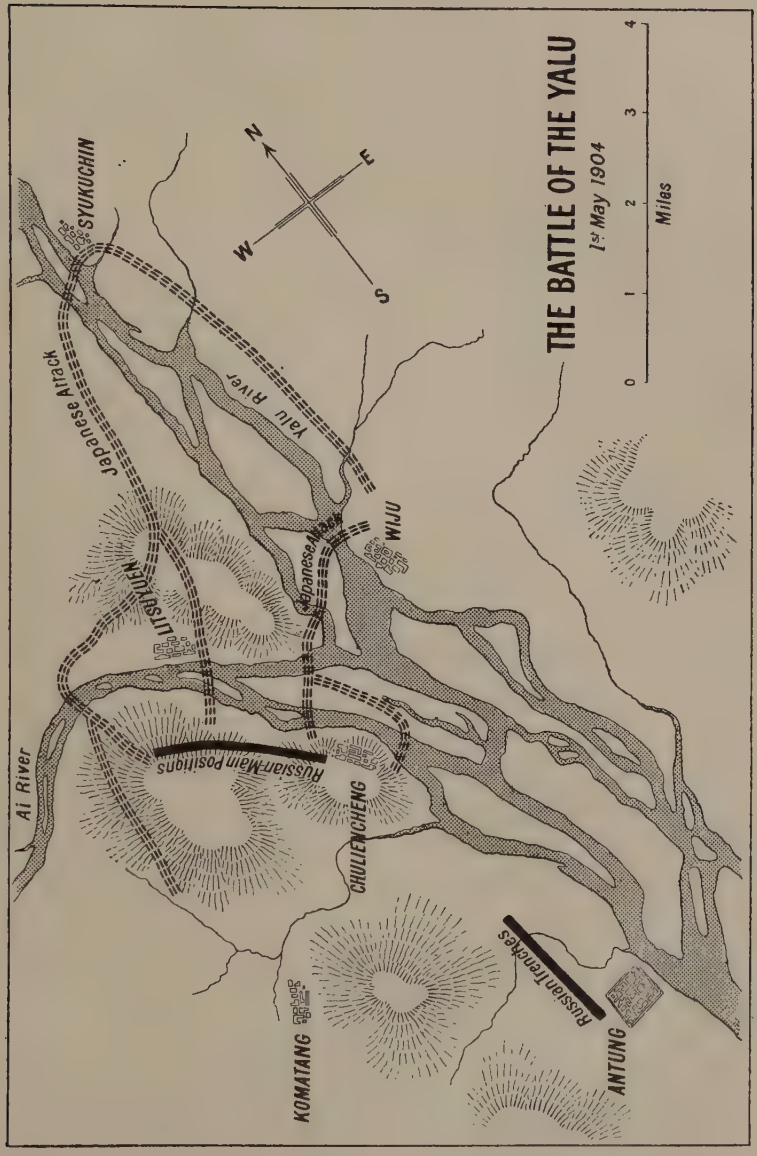
advance of a whole army into the blackness of the unknown was wonderfully impressive. Everything depended on getting into position before daybreak, and it was most admirably done. Really the battle was won in the silence of the night; the banging of guns and the slaying of brave men next day only proclaimed the accomplished fact.

CHAPTER XVI

A GREAT FIGHT

The Japanese force was divided into four sections, the fourth being in reserve; this comprised chiefly the troops that had done the hard work in the preliminary skirmishes of April 28, 29, and 30. The other three were to advance from widely different points, to get as near as possible to the Russian trenches unobserved, spread out ready to advance in open order as soon as the artillery fire should cease, and meantime they were to keep cover as closely as possible. The extreme right of the Japanese had gone forward from Sheungkong, nine miles up-river, viâ Hushan Peninsula and Litsuyuen village, and they now waded across the Ai River in the night, and scaled the cliffs on the extreme left flank of the Russian position, partly round the rear of it. They climbed the hill silently, at a score of different places, extending along about a mile of the Russiau lines. This was the work of the Japanese Twelfth Division.

The Central or Imperial Guards Division advanced from Wiju by boat-bridge to Chuli Island, thence waded a little back stream to Hushan Peninsula, near its extreme point, thence by a big pontoon bridge to the upper end of Sungkiang Island, waded two or


THE BATTLE OF THE YALU
1st May 1904
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Miles
N
E
S
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SYUKUCHIN
Japanese Attack
Yalu River
WIJU
Japanese Attack
LIUSHUJEN
Russian Main Positions
Ai River
CHULIENCHENG
KOMATANG
Russian Trenches
ANTUNG

three little muddy creeks, and were on the mainland, right under the biggest battery of the enemy.

The Japanese left wing, consisting of the Second Division, crossed a mile lower down, first to Chingting Island, a narrow, snake-shaped strip of fertile alluvial land that stretches for three miles below Wiju, and is only separated from the shore by a marshy little creek. Thence the advance was by a big bridge over the main stream to the lower end of Sungkiang Island, through the large straggling village of Sungkiang, and from there, plunging and floundering through two or three little creeks, to the mainland near the extreme right of the Chuliencheng entrenchments, and between them and the Antung position.

There were no Russian outposts on the river-bank. These had all been driven away in the skirmishes of the last three days, and not thrown forward again at night; in fact, General Sassulitch had concentrated his force in the immediate vicinity of Chuliencheng, about two miles back from the river, trusting to his artillery on the heights to prevent a crossing. The shell-fire from Wiju and from the small boats in the river had rendered the waterside untenable. The Russian General relied on Chuliencheng being such a central position that, if a crossing was attempted at any point, he would be able quickly to reach and defend the place, and surround and demolish any portion of the enemy that had crossed.

By 4.30 a.m. the Japanese were all in position and quite ready, stolidly watching the faint glimmer of dawn, and wondering how soon there would be light enough to begin the attack. As the Yalu Valley runs nearly north and south at this part, the Russians had

to face eastwards, and had the rising sun right in their eyes at most positions of the battlefield. A few minutes before five the first shot was fired. It came from a Japanese cannon, and it sent a shell screaming through the air as a 'Good-morning!' to the Russian guns on Tiger's Head Hill. Quickly came another, and another, for the Japanese gunners all had their ranges determined overnight, and did not need to waste a moment. Though the Russians were not slow to begin work, it took them some minutes to find the range, right in the eye of the brightening daybreak. Then there was a quickly-increasing 'bang-bang, bang-bang,' as one gun-crew after another warmed to the work. Soon, between Japanese and Russians, there were well over a hundred cannon thundering forth in fierce competition—a terrible race of life and death, to see which would kill or be killed first. Yet, while the guns were loaded faster and faster, the awful, deafening din grew worse, until the sense of hearing faded into a mere hopeless pain through and through the head, and the hurry and the excitement became madder and madder, a feverish frenzy that seemed untrue, unreal—still, each man had to keep in mind that precision was everything, that the gun must be carefully used, and no detail of the work must be omitted or over-hurried; in short, despite the pandemonium, a man must keep cool. As charge after charge crashed forth, the air became heavy with fumes, till one could not but think of Martinique in its last days, or of the end of the earth, while the incessant concussion was quite in keeping with such thoughts. It seemed as if one would be literally shaken to pieces.

Yet, after a while these sensations grew less vivid,

or the overstrain numbed the perceptions. At first it could be called nothing but awful; then bewildering; then exhausting, wearisome; and finally, almost absurd. The roar and crash, the volleys and thunders, which seemed so utterly overpowering, grew more familiar, and one could not help noticing that the world still continued to exist, and the enemy appeared to live through it. As time wore on, the enormous physical impression created by the shock to the ear grew less, and calm perception of the smallness of the damage grew clearer. See, the sun is quite bright and warm now, and the chill-looking remnants of blue-gray mist clinging in the valley by the river-side are disappearing. It is, in fact, a beautiful spring morning. What a pity to desecrate it with such slaughter and devilry! Sunday, too; day of peace and rest, 'for the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.' Mockery! Here is a picture of the results of civilization: a meek little Korean pony that had been brought from his native village to carry some war material stood wondering and bewildered, when a Russian shell took him in the fore-quarter with a violent explosion; now there is a mass of quivering and bleeding flesh and a smell of burnt chemicals.

So the day wore on, the minutes like hours. The Russian shells came hurtling through the air, and sometimes bursting among the Japanese positions, and their shrapnel was showering from overhead all around, yet it was comforting to note how harmless it seemed to be. A shell would plump into the middle of an empty field, where a hundred men crouched in the ditch alongside, and they would all idly turn their heads to watch it burst and scatter just twenty yards

FÊTE AT SEOUL AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE YALU.

THE CYLINDER SURMOUNTED BY A SPIKE IS A MONUMENT TO THE JAPANESE KILLED IN THE BATTLE.

KOREANS TAKING REFUGE IN THE HILLS DURING THE BOMBARDMENT OF WIJU, APRIL 28.

past them. Or it would not burst, but plunge into the earth with scarcely a sound. Or it would strike a clump of bushes and break its fall, and roll along the ground clumsily, like an empty beer-bottle, and a venturesome Japanese 'Tommy' would say, 'That is not a fuse shell; it is harmless if the cap does not strike,' and he would creep out of the ditch to fetch it and show his comrades. And they would laugh when he found it hot to the fingers. Then they would yawn sleepily, for there had been but little sleep the last night or two, and this waiting hour by hour was very tedious. It is true, as Verestchagin, the Russian war artist, used to say, 'Battles are mostly stupid.' In the popular acceptance, such words as 'cannonade' and 'bombardment' are taken to imply sudden death and total annihilation, and when one hears that a place has been 'shelled for some hours,' one thinks it can be only a heap of débris and carnage. The fact is that, though there may be a good deal of destruction to count up after it is all over, it is not very much at the time. Once in a while a man is seen to fall, here or there, but astonishingly seldom, compared with the amount of firing that goes on. A gun-crew would have to go on with eleven men instead of twelve; but they would go on, and it would make hardly any difference. They would display as much excitement in seizing a charge and putting it into place as football players seizing the ball and passing it into play; but, to recall the old lines—

'Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Volleyed and thundered!
Into the jaws of death,
Into the gates of hell'

—it certainly suggested that there must be some great poetic illusion, if all the noise and death and hell amounted to so little as this.

But it was not quite the same on the Russian side. The Japanese are especially good at shrapnel practice, timing the fuses with great accuracy, so as to scatter the spiteful, demoralizing showers of little bullets exactly where the infantry must suffer most. Thick and fast the deadly hail scattered all about the Russian batteries on the Tiger's Head, while the Russians had nothing like such a good target to aim at, and could not make such good practice. Moreover, common shell is cheaper, and armies are apt to have much more of it than of shrapnel, but in an ordinary engagement on land it is far less effective.

The artillery part of the battle lasted from five to seven o'clock that morning. Then there was a lull for a few minutes, as General Kuroki wished to make sure that all was ready for a general advance of infantry. A careful survey of each point of the line showed him that, as far as one could tell, everything was ready as arranged, and he gave the order at 7.30 for an advance. Then the whole aspect of affairs changed. This was no longer a wearisome banging of big cannon and an impatient waiting; it was a fight of men against men—men pressing forward eagerly across the fields, across lately vacated trenches, across little brooks and ditches, racing to get to close quarters at last, and have it out with the long-looked-for enemy, once for all.

The Russians held a long series of low, rolling knolls, gradually rising towards Chuliencheng, and thence by sharper ridges climbing into the amphi-

theatre of Manchurian mountains towards Fengwhancheng, while the hills terminated in an abrupt bluff at the Tiger's Head, near the junction of the Ai and the Yalu. The Japanese infantry had, in accordance with the cleverly-laid plan of General Kuroki, crept round to form a nearly complete circle, to cut off Chuliencheng and the Tiger's Head from the road to Fengwhancheng, and the Russians now saw this move, and had to hurry part of their force to the rear, to keep open the road and avoid being entirely surrounded. The extent of their position was altogether too great for the force they had; it was impossible to have plenty of men at each vital point. So they had to fall back, keeping up a tremendous fire as they went; and as they moved out towards the west, they gradually became more and more aware that the Japanese had outmanœuvred them, as increasing numbers came over the bluffs of the Ai, and over the undulating lowlands between Antung and Chuliencheng.

The Japanese soldiers responded gallantly to General Kuroki's call. This was the great day to which they had so long looked forward—their first big fight with these much-vaunted Europeans, and every man was keen to show that he was not afraid of all Europe or all the world.

The Russians also were full of dogged determination. Had it not been that their General was so outmanœuvred as to change his line in the middle of the fight, and to start a rearward movement at an inopportune moment, the Russian infantry ought to have been at their very best now, at the sort of fighting in which they always excelled, traditionally—that is, keeping in their trenches doggedly and taking punish-

ment without flinching. The strong point of the Russian moujik never was in brilliance of attack, or in the fire and dash that have carried some armies to victory against heavy odds; but in stolid, patient, heroic immobility under attack the Russian is supposed to have no equal. There were several miles of trenches, and the Japanese infantry went straight at them. It was a crucial test, to decide, once for all, which was the better man; and the Japanese came through it gloriously. The solid phalanx of Russian infantry had won victories in the past by holding its ground at all costs, till the enemy advanced and shattered himself against it as against a stone wall. So it was to be now.

But it was not so. The Japanese, spread out in open order, pressed forward on the north, the east, and the south, over about twenty square miles of country, and the Russians at every point of the circle held their fire till the enemy was within five hundred yards. Then the whole Russian line blazed from end to end, with volley after volley—the rapid volleys of magazine rifles at murderous range. It was here that the Japanese lost terribly: hundreds of them fell in a few minutes of impetuous advancing. But they, too, have their traditions, not of passive resistance or dogged defence, but of fierce, furious onslaught in face of certain death. Magnificently they lived up to their creed. The order rang out to take cover and wait.

Then the steadying voices of the officers were heard, here and there, all along the line, cautioning the men —to win the battle was the object in view, not to make mere displays of bravery and get killed; they must

make the most of every bit of cover, go slowly—no need to hurry, to fall into a trap. And so, Boer fashion, they crept forward, inch by inch—from a mound to a hut, then wait; then on to a clump of trees, wait again; then behind a low wall; and so, taking advantage of every scrap of cover, every little mud-heap in the fallow fields, every hillock and hummock, they kept pressing on, and stopping to fire; then on again, each man vying with his neighbour in the persistent advance up the slope of the hill to get at these famous Russians. Each man fired deliberately, for the order was independent firing, and every shot must hit. With so many thousands firing all the time, the rattle and roar and hoarse shouting on every side made a deafening din, but not so brutally brain-crushing as the artillery.

When the Japanese advance began, there had been nothing visible to aim at, and the few volleys they fired had been guesswork. The Russians lay low in their trenches, and the Japanese had gone forward nearly a mile before there came those deadly volleys. But now the Japanese could make them out, and each line officer was carefully coaching his men as they lay on the ground waiting for a chance to creep ahead. No random firing, no flurry, no pumping fire out of the magazines as fast as the mechanism can work, but everything now as cool and collected as the annual field manœuvres at Hiroshima; and, after the first few minutes of heavy slaughter, there was almost as little to see in the way of casualties as there would be at home. 'Iu-no-made, ikenai-yo'—'Till the word is given, no firing.' Then, after searching the enemy's position with field-glasses for two or three minutes,

'Teppo-wa issen metre-ni, awashte!'—'The range a thousand metres, prepare!' (The Japanese army regularly uses the European metre in range-finding.) Then the officer glances at his men, to see that they are all hearing and obeying; and, putting his field-glasses again to his eyes ready to see the effect, he cries, 'Fire!'

Nine times out of ten, when the volley goes, there is nothing to be seen of its effect. But, as he lets his patient men repeat the volley after two or three minutes, and then five minutes more, he notes that there are fewer bullets whizzing over from the enemy; and when some venturesome Japanese show themselves bolt upright, inviting and daring the enemy, there is no answering rain of bullets, and the mosquito-like humming that they made a little while ago seems further away. So he lets his men get up and advance to the next little mud-fence between the rice-fields. And as he still eagerly plies his binoculars, he at last espies, to his delight, the tops of some Russian soldiers' caps, creeping along where there must be a ditch that he had been unable to see. They are leaving their trenches! All that is to be seen is a tiny string of dark dots trailing along as if on the rough ground; but it is enough. Charge, and try to get them! But the Russians are already crouching down in the next line of trenches, and the Japanese must for a few minutes occupy the last-vacated Russian position. Here is a still smoking cigarette-end among a heap of empty cartridge cases. There, a splash of blood on a broken cottage-door at the bottom of the trench; some poor fellow was carried here, and then the stretcher came for him, apparently.

Though the country is fairly level, generally speaking, and the slope is gradual up to the Russian artillery position, still, there are innumerable little ups and downs in all directions, for the soft soil is deeply scored and crosscut by ditches, ravines, little dry river-beds, and irregularities of all sorts. In fact, it is a perfect network of natural entrenchments. Had the Russians been in sufficient numbers, they should have been able to hold this kind of country against the Japanese advance. If all the vaunted thousands of the Russian army cannot do better than to let such a magnificent opportunity pass for lack of an adequate force, it is an augury for the whole war. And, as one part after another of the Russian position was found untenable—on the north and the south—the defenders retired sullenly in the direction of Chuliencheng, but left Tiger's Head Hill more and more isolated, like a huge boulder standing out on the sands of the seashore after the tide has receded.

By ten o'clock the main body of the Russian army was in full retreat through Chuliencheng. It had been the intention to make the principal stand at that place, but already the Japanese had an advanced force of three or four companies trying to establish themselves right across the main road from Chuliencheng towards Fengwhancheng. This must be prevented at all hazards, or General Sassulitch would find his army entirely surrounded, and would be annihilated by cross-fires in every direction. And so the whole of the main body threw itself upon this small force of Japanese, and there was a furious hand-to-hand mêlée of the old-fashioned sort—for the Japanese were determined to hold the position or sacrifice themselves.

This was at a village called in Chinese Homutang, in Japanese Kobakuto, where the road from Antung joins the main road into Manchuria. If the Japanese could only hold this point, they would cut off the Russians at Antung also. So they fought desperately, and though the Russians ultimately broke away and rolled over them like a flowing tide, they were a very broken and demoralized crowd of fugitives instead of an army in good formation marching to a new position. The Japanese lost at this point about 300 out of 750, but they had done nobly. They held the point until more Japanese came up; they broke up the Russian force thoroughly, even if they did not prevent its flight; and, finally, they did prevent the flight of an important part—namely, the artillery on Tiger's Head Hill.

The capture of this hill was the crowning feat of the day. It was another Majuba. The heavy firing had killed many of the artillery horses, and the roads were in such bad condition that the guns could certainly not be removed quickly. Moreover, as the Japanese closed in on Chuliencheng from north and south, Tiger's Head Hill was more and more surrounded, and a portion of the Japanese centre was ordered to rush the hill. Up to the time of the general retreat, the Japanese had rather given the hill the go-by. The Russian infantry had fled from all the trenches skirting the hill, and the gunners stood by their guns bravely, long after their comrades had retired. But a cannon can only hit in one place at a time, and here was a whole hillside swarming with Japanese—myriads of them, as it seemed—struggling and clambering up the face of the rocky cliffs on the

JAPANESE PAYING RESPECT TO RUSSIAN GRAVES AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE YALU.

north, racing breathless up the grassy slopes on the south; little brown devils, yelling themselves hoarse with excitement and enthusiasm, cheering each other on, gasping for breath and clutching their weapons resolutely as one man collided with another, jostling and stumbling and scrambling over obstacles in the path, till the confused chorus of mere yells gradually took shape, and merged into one of the regular battle-songs of the army—a rugged, primitive ballad, not very musical, but rising and swelling into a grand, sonorous chant which the surroundings made sublime.

And there on the hilltop, in the centre of a shell-battered and bullet-riddled earth fort, among disabled guns and heaps of mangled humanity, were the vanquished, one of them holding up a white flag—a piece of hospital bandage-cloth, hoisted on a reversed Cossack spear. It was enough. The place was alive with Japanese now, panting and perspiring with the rush uphill, pleased and proud and in the seventh heaven of delight as they planted their dearly loved banner of the Rising Sun on the top of the rampart and cheered till their throats nearly cracked. Then, as victors and vanquished stood and stared at each other in a dazed sort of wonderment, not knowing what to do, the first officer among the Japanese, with quiet dignity and most perfect courtesy, turned to salute a brave foe, who had fought gallantly to the last against overwhelming odds, and the other Japanese followed suit. It was a well-deserved honour, and it honoured those who gave it. It was some little time before anybody could be found to act as interpreter and establish relations between them, but in five or ten minutes a Japanese officer who spoke French

found a Russian who did the same, and after that the Russians were treated with every kindness. Out of about 350 who surrendered, it was found that over one-third were wounded, some so badly that there was no hope for them.

CHAPTER XVII

A DECISIVE VICTORY

THERE were twenty-eight cannon captured, and an immense quantity of provisions and miscellaneous stores, besides rifles and ammunition. The field-guns were of a quick-firing type, slightly larger calibre than the Japanese, and a little shorter. They were, of course, a serious loss to the Russians, but no direct gain to the Japanese, since there was hardly any ammunition for them, as it had almost all been used, and the mechanism had been put out of order by the Russians before they surrendered. General Sassulitch had managed to get the rest of his artillery away in time—about twenty field-guns. Altogether the Russians left over 1,000 of their men dead on the field. How many they carried away and how many wounded there were could not be ascertained. In the afternoon the Japanese followed up the line of retreat for a little way, but made the mistake of going too quickly into a narrow defile among the hills, and the Russian rearguard caught them at a disadvantage. There were about 300 Japanese killed or wounded in this pursuit, and the total Japanese casualties in the whole day's work were 5 officers killed and 33 wounded, 218 soldiers killed and 783 wounded, making 1,039 casualties in all. The official report

showed 1,363 Russians found dead on the field and buried by the Japanese, and 18 officers and 595 men surrendered.

More important than the killing of men, capture of cannon, or even the occupation of a valuable strategic position, was the moral effect of the battle. The Russians, whatever their original plan may have been, were utterly demoralized, as is shown by the fact that they practically stampeded through Fengwhancheng, a highly important position, without making any attempt to stand and check the Japanese advance. The whole country is mountainous, and all the roads wind up through rocky ravines and passes that offer excellent opportunities for defence. Fengwhancheng is about forty miles from Chuliencheng, and before coming to it there is the old 'Palisade,' a minor edition of the Great Wall of China. It is a formidable barrier, mainly built of huge logs, in some places backed with earth, forming a very strong and solid wall; in other places the earth has fallen away with the lapse of years, but the massive timbers remain. At wide intervals there are gateways in this barrier, and a small town has sprung up at each of these gates, for they have been in existence many hundreds of years, and a very large traffic has constantly passed along these roads. The gateway and town just between Fengwhancheng and Chuliencheng both have the name of 'Korea Gate,' Kaoli Mun, the old Chinese word which we pronounce 'Korea' being really Kaoli. At this place nature and man have combined forces to make an ideal position for defence. There is the great 'Mandarin Road,' leading from Seoul to Peking. It is shut in on both sides by granite hills, sparsely clothed with

"Imperial Guard, quick—march!"

On to Moukden.

mountain grasses, bracken, and pine-scrub, not at all unlike the Pass of Killiecrankie, where the Highland clansmen dashed vainly against King George's serried ranks of infantry. In the neck of the pass is the massive fortified gateway, with a high tower over it, and the ancient wall extending along the crest of the hills northward and southward ; the approaches to the gateway are fortified too, making quite a first-class rallying-place for a retreating army. The town is mainly on the Manchurian side of the gate, and would be useful for quartering troops.

But the Russians were not disposed to make a stand at all. The Japanese sent out small parties in various directions, feeling the way, questioning the Chinese villagers, and trying how far they could get along all possible routes without being attacked by the Russians; and the news of these scouting parties' movements reached the Russians, of course in somewhat distorted form, and General Sassulitch felt sure that he was being surrounded by eight different columns of Japanese, aggregating three or four times the number of his force. He accordingly ordered a retreat with all possible speed towards the nearest point on the railway-line—Liaoyang, about sixty-five miles away. It was not a retirement in good order and with fighting strength unimpaired, like that of Wellington to Torres Vedras, or like the whole campaign of Fabius ; for General Sassulitch had lost about half of his artillery, and was in such headlong flight that he had to destroy an immense quantity of his supplies at Fengwhancheng, in order to expedite his retreat. And he had not time to call in his outlying detachments. For several days, small bodies of Russian troops

falling back on their main line of march found themselves in a country overrun by Japanese.

The Japanese army occupied Fengwhancheng without resistance on May 5, and then the main force halted there for a considerable time, while scouting parties and larger reconnoitring forces were sent out in every direction, to make sure of every mountain glen and every town and village within a radius of thirty miles round.

Meanwhile, as soon as news of the victory on the Yalu reached Japan, dozens of transports filled with troops and supplies of every kind were sent to Elliott Island, and thence to the coast of Liaotung and the mouth of the Yalu, to press the attack simultaneously all along the line. Another effort, greater than any before, was made to block the channel of Port Arthur on May 3, and was effective in keeping the Russian fleet imprisoned at least for two or three weeks; and finally a flying column of Cossacks, which had crossed the Yalu at Chosan, about sixty miles above Wiju, and had invaded Korea with the intention of raiding the Japanese line of communications, was badly repulsed at Anju, between Wiju and Pingyang, and had hard work to escape back into Manchuria by little-frequented tracks over the mountains.

The battle of the Yalu demonstrated the superiority of the Japanese to the Russians in several ways.

First, there was on the Russian side a fatal indecision—a division of opinion as to the whole plan of campaign; and this was pitted against the absolute singleness of plan of the Japanese and their methodical, undeviating execution of a coherent course, determined long ago and thoroughly understood by each

responsible general. There were two great sections of opinion among the Russians—the Alexieff section, believing in Port Arthur and the fleet as the principal hope of Russia, and all the *Hinterland* of Manchuria as a mere appendage to it; and the Kuropatkin section, convinced that Russia's strength lay far inland, away from the dangerous sea-power of Japan, and among the vastnesses of Northern Manchuria and Eastern Siberia. It is not necessary to go deeply into the question whether there ought or ought not to have been any serious fighting near the seaboard; the important point is that Russia lacked decision.

This was shown in the first instance by the fact that many of the troops engaged at Chuliencheng had been sent first to Port Arthur, and then marched hurriedly the whole length of the Liaotung Peninsula, only just in time for the battle. Yet the war had been in progress practically three months. Another example was seen in the abandonment of Fengwhancheng. That place had been selected for the principal resistance against the Japanese advance, and Chuliencheng was to be merely a preliminary check. And the worst of all the instances of conflicting opinions was in the direction taken by the retreating Russians. By going north-west towards Liaoyang, instead of south-west towards Port Arthur, they made it so much the easier for the Japanese to gain a footing at any place they chose in Liaotung and overrun the peninsula, isolating Port Arthur, and thus fatally dividing and weakening the Russian forces.

In short, the Russians were undecided whether to make a serious stand, or to retire and harass the enemy's advance by minor actions all along the road;

they were undecided whether to make the first fight at Chuliencheng or not ; they were undecided whether to support Port Arthur or not. The Japanese in each case decided for them.

Secondly, the Russians showed that their numbers were far less formidable than had been expected. Despite all their efforts since September, 1903, they had no really large force available, or undoubtedly they would have used it. There was nothing to gain by letting the Japanese enter Manchuria ; they were allowed to enter because the ' overwhelming numbers ' were not there when wanted. Even the numbers that might have been at the disposal of the commander at Chuliencheng were to a great extent frittered away, by placing 5,000 men at Antung, 1,000 at and near Tatungkow, 1,000 at Takushan, 1,000 at Chosan on the Upper Yalu, and so on, instead of leaving mere outposts of two or three men here and there for purposes of information, and concentrating all possible force for a crushing blow at the heart of the enemy's position. In fact, the Russians showed that they were unable to carry out their intention of occupying effectively enormous stretches of country ; and that is at the root of the whole war.

Thirdly, they proved that their knowledge of the country was greatly inferior to that possessed by the Japanese, and that this made a great difference in the fighting. It helped the Japanese to move about at ease, and arrive at the right place at the right time, while the Russians were in most cases perfect strangers to the country, the towns and roads, the hills and rivers. There had been abundant opportunity for the Russians to make themselves as familiar with the

topography as the Japanese had done, for Russia had been in practical occupation of Manchuria since the railway concession was obtained in 1897; but the opportunity had not been well used. The Japanese, on the other hand, had remarkably full information, not only about the country, but also about the disposition of the enemy's troops in it. This was a handicap not limited in its operation to the one fight, nor to any portion of Manchuria, but likely to prove effective everywhere between the sea and the Siberian boundary.

A fourth fundamental difference between the Russian and Japanese armies was in the work of outposts, sentries, and scouts during the progress of operations. The Japanese had very little guesswork or uncertainty about their calculations of the enemy's movements, while the Russians were usually in the dark as to what the Japanese were doing. Their sentries seemed far less vigilant than the Japanese, and not as well posted by the officers. Their scouting seemed a complete failure. This class of work depends on individual keenness, initiative, and intelligence, and the characteristic difference between the two races could not but be a very important factor in deciding all battles between them.

This difference in alertness, keenness, quickness, largely accounts also for the fact that the Japanese generals outmanœuvred the Russians at the Yalu and afterwards. The Yalu battle showed the difference so clearly that subsequent battles only emphasized the verdict of that one. It also showed a great difference in the standards of efficiency. The Japanese transport and commissariat department, ammunition supplies, and all the other vital parts of the machinery of a

campaign, worked smoothly, almost perfectly, by comparison with the Russian. Many of the prisoners taken by the Japanese were in a pitiable plight from want of food. It was quite evident that the Japanese were the superiors in organization and efficient working.

Another fatal weakness of the Russians was in their artillery. It was found that their guns could not touch the Japanese at anything over 5,000 yards, while the Japanese shells could travel well over that, and the gunners could attain a deadly precision. Now, this is where the whole theory of Russian warfare broke down. Napoleon was wrong if he ever did say that Providence was on the side of the biggest battalions; he should have said the side of those who can shoot best. Russia had pinned her faith to her numbers, and the numbers failed.

The celerity of movement displayed by the Japanese troops in mastering point after point too quickly for the Russians to strengthen the defence was another notable factor, which could not but prove a deciding influence throughout the war. The whole flanking movement in the direction of Hushan was typical. The Russians had a force there—a small outpost. It was attacked suddenly in the night, and no help could be summoned from the main force, and so there was no alternative but to let the Japanese have the position. The whole value of defensive tactics is lost if a section, when attacked, is not at once supported from the centre. Hushan was certainly an important part of the Russian defence. There was need for prompt information about what was going on there; there was need for quick judgment, or quick action on a previously thought-out plan, and quick movement of

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

RUSSIAN SHARPSHOOTERS IN ACTION.

men to the weak spot. Providence is usually on the side of the quickest battalion.

Finally, the most important of all the factors which made the Yalu battle pre-eminently the decisive battle of the war was that the Japanese soldier had made the acquaintance of the Russian soldier, and had made him run. And the Russian soldier had learnt that the despised Asiatic, whom he had always called 'makaki' (the monkey), suddenly turned out to be a terrible fighter and a winner. A single battle cannot decide a whole war, as a rule (though there have been exceptions); but there is usually one which stands out above all the rest as marking the character of the war. Other battles may be on a larger scale, and may drive home the lessons more forcibly, but so long as they confirm, instead of reversing, the first impressions, the course of events is not changed, and the deciding point is the point where that course first became clear. It could, of course, not be by one defeat that the mighty power of Russia could be broken; but this one blow broke the spell of Russian resistlessness, which had crushed the largest part of Asia and had overawed Europe. It demonstrated that the prowess of the Samurai race was not merely a tale of Old Japan, unsuited for modern times and European warfare. It rekindled in the Japanese veins the spirit of Hideyoshi and Ieyasu —the spirit which successfully resisted the invading myriads of Mongols, and carried the war to the mainland. It convinced the Japanese that what they did against Kublai they could do against modern Russia; and it convinced the masses of the Russians that the Japanese were not to be overcome as easily as the other Asiatics of the present day, but seemed to possess

the resistless fury of the world-conquerors of the Dark Ages.

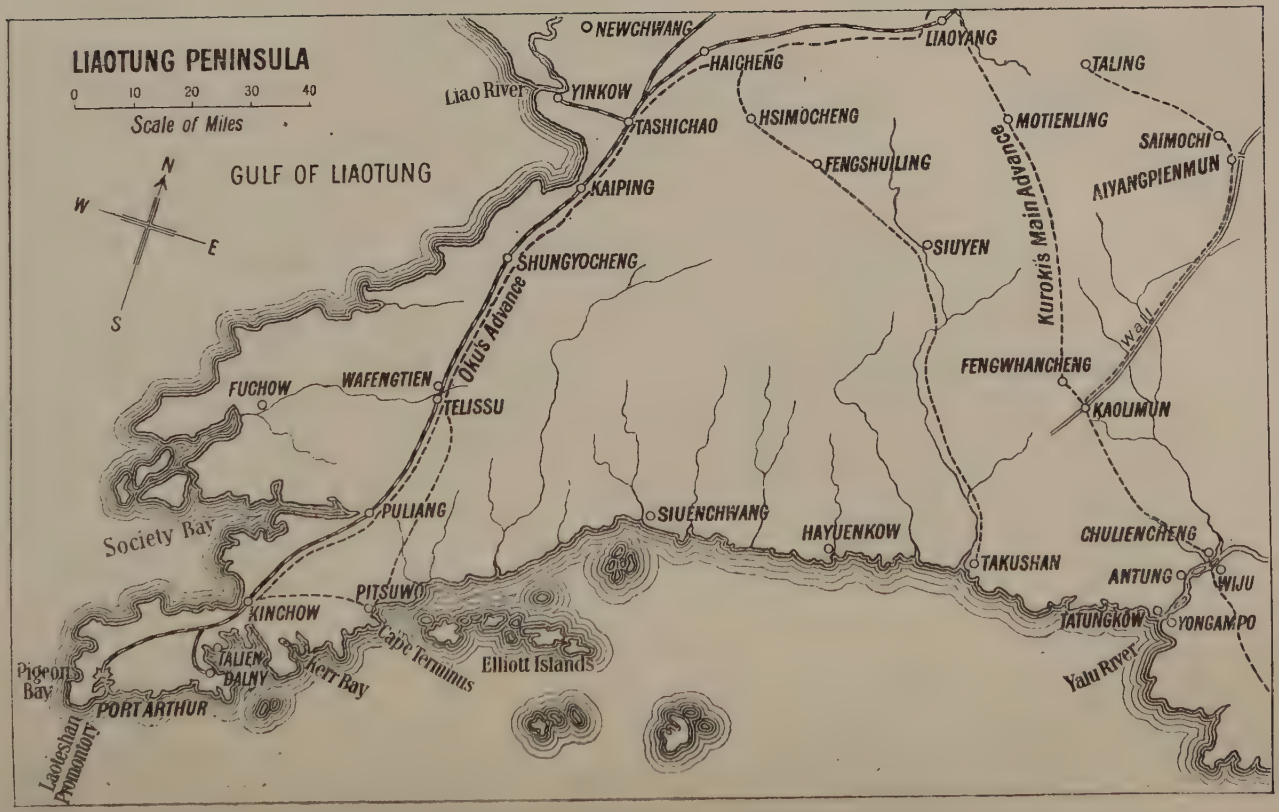
The Yalu fight marked Russia's inability to take the aggressive. It marked the beginning of her downfall. It was the point at which her imposing front first crumbled in. It was a blow inflicted by Japan, not to pick off some isolated outpost, but to drive straight at the heart of the whole Russian position in Manchuria. It was aimed to cut in two the principal fighting force of Russia, so as to demolish the parts piecemeal. It established once for all that the Japanese fight better than the Russians, man for man, and can probably give a good account of themselves against any army in the world, in a Far Eastern battlefield.

CHAPTER XVIII

LANDING IN LIAOTUNG

The Japanese armies began three simultaneous movements in the first few days in May, and each of the three was subdivided into a number of carefully-timed operations. The principal one was not the quickest. It was General Kuroki's main advance upon Liaoyang, and it had to wait until the other movements had reached a certain stage of development. The second portion of the Japanese operations was parallel and auxiliary to this, and began with a landing at Takushan, about forty miles west of the mouth of the Yalu. From this point an army under General Oku made its way across the widest part of the Liaotung Peninsula to attack the Russian positions along the railway in the region about Newchwang, in co-operation with General Kuroki's attack further north, and ultimately combining with it at Liaoyang. The third movement, judged by importance, but the first in order of date and of dramatic interest, was the attack on Port Arthur, beginning with the capture of Port Adams and the interruption of railway and telegraph communications.

The Liaotung Peninsula may be roughly compared with the south-west extremity of England. The land lies in a very similar position, and the nature of the


LIAOTUNG PENINSULA
0 10 20 30 40
Scale of Miles
GULF OF LIAOTUNG
N
W
E
S
NEWCHWANG
Liao River
YINKOW
HAICHENG
LIAOYANG
TALING
TASHICHAO
HSIMOCHENG
MOTIENLING
SAIMOCHI
FENGSHUILING
AIYANGPIENMUN
KAIPING
SIUYEN
Kuroki's Main Advance
SHUNGYOCHENG
Oku's Advance
Wall
FENGWHANCHENG
FUCHOW
WAFENGTIEN
TELISSU
KAOLIMUN
PULIANG
Society Bay
SIUENCHWANG
HAYUENKOW
CHULIENCHENG
TAKUSHAN
ANTUNG
WIJU
PITSUWO
KINCHOW
TATUNGKOW
YONGAMPO
TALIEN
DALNY
Cape Terminus
Elliott Islands
Pigeon Bay
Arrt Bay
Yalu River
PORT ARTHUR
Laotieshan Promontory

coast-line bears some resemblance. At the end is a rocky promontory in both cases. If Mount's Bay had three or four miles of anchorage inside of the island, and if St. Michael's Mount were three or four miles long and connected with the mainland at all states of tide, on one side, it would resemble Port Arthur. Land's End and the Lizard are not at all unlike Laoteshan and the headlands towards Dalny. The whole coast is just about as rocky and rugged, and the up-country aspect much the same. Further along the coast, going eastward, the shore softens gradually, until one can see in south-east Liaotung many stretches of low crumbling cliff and shelving sands that recall Bournemouth, minus its civilization. On the north side of the peninsula, the parallel is nearer; the Gulf of Liaotung, with the Liao River running into it, may well be likened to the Bristol Channel and the Severn, but the port of Newchwang is on a dead flat instead of being on rising ground like Bristol. The mountains in the interior of Liaotung, and up in Manchuria, are far higher and wilder than anything in the West of England, but there is still a fair parallel.

The Russian position would thus be like a long line of troops at every few miles of a single line of railway running from Land's End up to, say, Bristol (Newchwang), Birmingham (Liaoyang), and Derby or York (Harbin).

The Japanese under General Kuroki, with some aid from the fleet, got possession of the mouth of the Yalu, in a position relatively similar to that of Spithead, though of course one must not suppose that Southampton and Portsmouth are really anything like Wiju and Antung; the parallel does not go beyond mere

geographical positions, and those only approximate. The first army, then, proceeded to march inland by practically all the different roads at once, but mainly in three columns, from the Yalu towards Liaoyang, as if it had been from Southampton towards Birmingham, threatening the heart of the enemy's position. Meanwhile, other invading armies landed at various points along the south-west coast, aiming directly at the railway-line at a number of different points, while one force seized the narrowest part of Cornwall and cut off the Land's End stronghold. Afterwards there were other forces landed in the Liaotung Gulf (Bristol Channel) to make simultaneous attacks on the railway, to complete the isolation of the fortress, and to harry the enemy in his retreat all along the line up to the point of concentration far in the interior. The conditions of the fight stipulated that there could be no utilizing of any country on the west side of the Severn (Liao).

If the Russians had been numerous enough, and quick enough, they might have surrounded each section of the Japanese, and demolished them one by one. Kuropatkin tried, and found that his forces could not do it. All the cleverness in the world could not suffice to make slow men move faster than quick men, or guns of 5,000 yards' range hold their own against guns that are 7,000 yards away and can score hits at that, or make 30,000 men occupy as many different roads and mountain-paths as may be discovered and invaded by 60,000 men, especially when the invaders know all the paths so much better. And thus it was that, point by point, the Russians found themselves surrounded and outnumbered, nearly

THE FIRST LANDING IN LIAOTUNG. WADING ACROSS THE MUD-BANKS AT PITSUWO.

cornered, and as they could not surround they had to concentrate. In their original scheme they would have had two main centres, with a sufficiently large force at each place to close in upon any invading army from both sides. It would have been as if the army landing at Southampton had to deal with two opposing armies, one from Cornwall and the other from the North. But the Cornwall army was kept penned up, and the northern line was threatened at so many points that the only possible course was to retire as slowly as possible and inflict as much damage on the enemy as circumstances might allow.

The Japanese armies of Liaotung left Japan between April 20 and 25 in about forty-five transports, two main squadrons of fifteen each, and the rest in twos and threes day by day. They crossed to Korean waters without any warship escort, but the Japanese patrol of the straits between Japan and Korea had been increased, so as to make sure the Vladivostok squadron should not be able to get through and raid the troopships. There were now and then seen stray torpedo-boats and gunboats, keeping a look-out or taking important despatches and plans from one officer to another. Thus the troopships made their way past the countless islands of the Korean Archipelago, and came to a halt at the Elliott Islands. Here they waited, with a strong guard of warships, and received news of the progress of events on the Yalu. Had anything gone wrong with General Kuroki's plans there, he could have been promptly reinforced. When news of his victory was received, the word was at once given to take full advantage of it, and two landings were effected simultaneously at Takushan and Pitsuwo

on May 5, the day when the foremost scouts of General Kuroki's advance guard ventured right into Feng-whancheng and found the place abandoned. While the Japanese fleet redoubled its efforts to keep Port Arthur closed, there were gunboats and other small craft reconnoitring the coast incessantly, and receiving information from the shore from Japanese spies who passed as Chinese fishermen or peasants.

The Russians had nothing like the alertness of their opponents, and were entirely uninformed of what was going on just out of sight of land. The first thing they knew was that fifty or sixty vessels were anchored off Pitsuwo, and the few Cossacks stationed on a low hillock overlooking the beach were being shelled by light-draught gunboats, to which they could not reply. Liaotung was occupied by many thousands of Russian troops, but they were all spread out, fifty here, a hundred there, and before there was time to get any large force together it was too late. Sunday was the day of the Yalu fight; the Russians in Port Arthur did not hear of it till Tuesday, and then they were told it was an unimportant affair. On Tuesday their attention was wholly occupied in resisting a naval attack and a 'bottling-up' expedition; on Thursday they heard of a landing at Pitsuwo, and on Saturday the railway and telegraph had been cut. General Stoessel might, perhaps, have moved out an army to Pitsuwo to surround the Japanese, but there were a hundred other places where other armies might land to surround him if he tried such a move. And the Japanese had constant information. General Kuroki gave the cue to Admiral Togo, who did his part and then gave the cue to General Oku to step on shore.

On the night before the landing two boat-loads of blue-jackets put in to the land, at places five miles apart, on each side of Pitsuwo, nearly opposite the islands where all the ships lay. Men from these two boats waded ashore, crept along in the dark till they came to Chinese peasants' huts, and made a few inquiries of the inmates. Everything was satisfactory; no fresh movement of the Russians, just the same small bodies of Cossacks with a light calibre field-gun or two here and there along the coast, and they were thinking more about the Hunghutze, the Red-beard Bandits of Manchuria, than about Japanese having the boldness to come. So the sailors waded back to their boats and pulled off to the waiting destroyers; and shortly after midnight the first half-dozen ships had the order given them by the twinkling masthead light to up-anchor and move over to the mainland. It was not desired to let the Russians see more than a small flotilla, and at the same time similar little flotillas were permitted to be sighted off the north coast of the peninsula, at points a hundred miles apart. So the Russians received reports simultaneously that the Japanese were appearing at all points of Liaotung. It was quite impossible to hurry forward and meet each invasion; to deal with them singly was out of the question, for the one attacked would prove to be merely used as a decoy while the other invasions could be pressed home. So there was nothing to do but keep still and wait.

Pitsuwo is one of the places where the Japanese landed in 1894. They know the village, the mud-cliffs 60 to 100 feet high, the wide waste of mud-flats between high- and low-water mark; they know how the water averages only 5 feet deep a mile from the shore,

with mud-banks barely a foot under water and a few holes 10 or 12 feet deep, where the swirling eddies play tricks with the soft ooze. Steamers sometimes get aground three or four miles off-shore. The Japanese know this, and everything else there is to know about Pitsuwo, as well as they know Yokohama or Kobe. This is the place where the troopship *Masayoshi* was burnt accidentally at her moorings in 1894, and eighty tons of explosives went up with one huge peal of thunder and a glare of ruddy lightning. just as the 1,500 soldiers had got clear away in boats. What specially interested me was that I also had just left the ship. Pitsuwo does not look interesting, however: it looks like the most ordinary ugly mud-hole in the world.

The country hereabouts is low-lying, gently undulating, like that between Bridlington and the Humber, It is rich agricultural land, just beginning to brighten a little in May—for winter stays late here. The land is thickly dotted with villages, mostly containing one or two hundred hovels of rough stone and mud, with straw thatch, about like the poorest class of Irish peasants' cabins or Scottish crofters' bothies. The fields were bare in May, but it could be seen that almost every inch of soil is used. Trees are rather scarce, for fuel is in great demand in the bitter winter. and no attempt has been made to preserve the woodlands, so they have ceased to exist long ago, only a few scanty clumps of trees remaining in the grounds of each village temple. Roads, as usual in China, do not exist, if the word means anything more than the merest track. The hills forming the backbone of Liaotung do not come near the coast at this part: they are visible

about ten or fifteen miles inland. The people are quiet, humble peasantry, mostly from Shantung. Liaotung used to be a province of Korea, and the name of Si Kaoli or West Korea still survives in one part, near Pitsuwo, but the more industrious Chinese have entirely displaced the Koreans, who are practically nowhere to be seen here.

The description of Pitsuwo can also be used for Siuenchwang and Hayuenkow, where other portions of the Japanese army landed in 1894, and probably also in 1904, though not mentioned in official despatches. At all these places a little river makes its way seaward, but is only navigable for small river-boats, as the vast accumulations of sand and mud along the seashore form barriers at the river-mouths. Takushan is much the same, but it has a rather larger river, and there is a high hill behind the town. From the Yalu mouth (Tatungkow) to Takushan, thence to Hayuenkow, thence to Siuenchwang, thence to Pitsuwo, and thence to Talienwan, may be put down roughly as thirty-five miles each stretch. Pitsuwo is the principal landing-place for an attack on Talien and Port Arthur —the others are mere outposts.

The landing was quite an easy matter, for to the Japanese it was simply the repetition of an oft-told tale. Two gunboats and two destroyers, selected for their light draught, went as close inshore as the conditions allowed, namely, well within two miles, the tide being high in the early hours of the morning. Daylight was good enough by 5 a.m. for all practical purposes, and a start was made then, so as to get as much as possible accomplished before the ebb-tide, which would come all too quickly. There was no time to lose—there

seldom is in war, though to the outside world it often seems a long while between the acts, for there are so many things to do, each in its proper order. These little boats, with the sounding-lead going at the bow and a man with a 20-feet pole at the stern helping to sound, plumped a 2-inch shell into the middle of a Cossack camp on the top of a rounded knoll just outside Pitsuwo, and another messenger of the same sort into the Russian military telegraph station on the outskirts of the village; then for about fifteen minutes these sighting shots were followed up by a careful planting of machine-gun missiles, with an occasional touch of shrapnel, along the shore and then along the road leading inland, as the Russians turned out and migrated at full speed westward, over the tail-end of the hill range, towards Kinchow. They could not stay; they had no guns, and their rifles were useless against a fleet. Had any considerable force been in the neighbourhood, they might have stood their ground and tried to repel the first landing-parties of Japanese, for the falling tide would have compelled the ships to stand further out to sea; one must not take risks with a shelving sea-bed and a 15-feet rise and fall of water. But the Russians did not wait. It would almost certainly have meant sacrificing themselves, and though some people hold that such sacrifices are very useful in their way, the traditional Russian policy is a more prudent one.

Then it was 'all hands to the boats,' the bluejackets landing first. The ships' cutters and 'whaleboats,' with fifty men in each, fully armed and carrying reserve supplies of food and ammunition, besides a couple of Maxim guns and signalling apparatus, pulled off towards

land, and when still nearly a mile from it they stuck in the mud, for they drew eighteen or twenty inches. The men did not waste time groping around for a way to get past the mud-banks, for they had known what to expect; each big rowing-barge had its little dinghy towing astern, and the men were transferred to these. Even these could not get within a half-mile of dry land, for the ups and downs of the mud-flats, half awash and half dry, had to be negotiated somehow. The men promptly hopped into the water, not much above freezing at 6.30 on a spring morning, and, after splashing and struggling and floundering through the shallows for ten or twenty minutes, there were 600 sailors all ashore ready for a battle, their clothes wet and dirty, but their arms and ammunition dry and in perfect order. The last few boat-loads raced and laughed and grumbled, like so many schoolboys out on a holiday and hating to be left behind. Still bare-footed and streaming wet, they formed into line and made straight for the knolls recently held by the enemy. No racing now, but keeping in order, at that steady jog-trot which the Japanese jinricksha coolie can keep up for hours at a stretch in the ordinary way of business. Leaving the slippery beach, up the slope into the little hamlet of huts where the people were just turning out of bed to see what the noise was about, out into the fields and through farmyards, up a hill to the Russian look-out station, and the flag of the Rising Sun was hoisted in Liaotung Peninsula for the first time in ten years. And the same old 'Banzai!' It seemed as if yesterday had come back.

And the Russian quarters were found much in the same state as the Chinese of old: a mere rough shed,

made of a few poles and planks and the straw matting of the country, littered with all the signs of recent habitation—a still warm fire in a hole in the ground, some scraps of food thrown down in haste, empty meat tins, a 'kong' or large water-jar of crude form, such as every hut in this part of the world has ; and, at a very respectful distance, two or three of the least frightened small boys of the village, in open-eyed curiosity, staring hard and calling to their friends to come and see. And that is how the Japanese first established themselves in Liaotung.

From the hilltop it was just possible to get a glimpse of the retreating Russians, now four miles away, heading obliquely inland. They were only visible as so many dark specks, discernible as they went over some piece of rising ground and, after disappearing on the other side for a moment, again showed up, half an inch further on the skyline to the left.

As soon as the Japanese flag on Pitsuwo Hill was seen from the big troopships in the offing, the order was given to land the whole of the advance guard of the army. The *Hongkong* and *Nippon*, 6,000-ton ocean liners, came as near as they could, and each had a big string of junks and sampans towing astern. These were used to take the men as near as possible, and then the soldiers followed the example of the sailors and waded ashore, holding their clothes and weapons overhead. A flat-bottomed boat carrying twenty-five men, each weighing (fully accoutred) not less than 200 pounds, will ground in twelve or fourteen inches of water, but when the men jump overboard they sink another foot in the ooze. It is not easy on a slippery sea-bed, with a bit of undertow in the tide,

LANDING THE FIELD-GUNS AT TAKUSHAN.

THE BLACK MARK ON THE ROCK MEANS 'SITE OF TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'

to carry a 60-pound kit, and so it took rather a long time for the distance; if the Russians had been on the alert, they might have caught the Japanese at a serious disadvantage.

The junks and sampans used in landing the soldiers were afterwards lashed together and planked over, to make a long floating jetty for the landing of cargo. It is really marvellous how quickly the Japanese do these things: a few little boats, a few planks and pieces of straw rope, a few mat-bags of earth, and there is a jetty already thronged with hurrying traffic, before the engineers have done more than a tenth part of the long pier that is needed. While one set of men keep coming and going, attending to the transport of stores along the new landing-stage, another gang of men keep on bringing up one more boat, one more boat, till the structure is 1,000 yards long, serviceable at high or low water, with a 12-feet way along it.

The cargo is the important thing. To each company of soldiers in a regiment there is assigned a complete supply of everything required, and each company has to look after itself and its own goods. This is an admirable arrangement, and works like clockwork. Bags of rice, bags of charcoal (only to be used when fuel for cooking is unobtainable locally), boxes of ammunition, timber cut to sizes for putting up sheds at Pitsuwo—for it is at once to be made a depot, and the beach is the best site; light hand-carts—the universal 'niguruma' of Japan, as handy as a jinricksha and as capacious a cargo-carrier as about four London costers' barrows; reels of telegraph- and telephone-wire, insulated so as to do duty when laid along the ground, dispensing with poles if poles happen to be scarce (though

poles must be used when possible, or the wire is trodden on too much); tubs of salt cabbage and the famous 'daikon,' a sort of giant radish eaten with rice; bundles of dried cuttlefish, as tough as stirrup-leathers and about as tasty, but the Japanese somehow manage to eat them; tins of beef, some from Chicago and some the product of Japan, labelled 'Hokuriku Nourishing Cow Meat,' and so on; Red Cross tents and stacks of stretchers, boxes of medicines and cases of instruments, bales of lint and 'first aid' handkerchiefs, covered with diagrams and instructions printed indelibly in the fabric; and apparently endless numbers of bundles, bags, bales, and boxes, all neatly labelled, are promptly hauled off to their appointed places.

On one side of the landing-place is pegged out a space for cargo intended to remain here; on the other side a signboard is put up to show that transit cargo, intended to accompany the troops on their march forward, is to be placed there. For the former cargo, plank sheds seem to drop from the clouds into the exact place marked; for the latter, little wooden sign-posts with a few hieroglyphics painted in Indian ink spring out of the ground, and each is soon surrounded by its own proper class of goods. And a little further on would be seen a man hammering into the ground a wooden post planed down one side, and deftly dabbing on the planed part with an inky brush the Japanese word for 'hospital site,' on another 'depot headquarters site,' on another 'ammunition site,' and so on. In wonderfully little time there was a town in existence, with signs on the street corners, and it became quite unnecessary for a coolie, struggling ashore with a heavy burden on his shoulders, to ask, 'What am I to

do with this?' The labels on the packages and the signposts on the ground showed how well the Japanese live up to the old motto: 'A place for everything, and everything in its place.'

It was about 5.30 a.m. when the gunboats drove the Russians away, 7.30 when the sailors reached dry land, 7.40 when the flag went up for the ships to see and come; and by noon some 2,500 men, fully equipped for immediate action, and several hundred tons of cargo, were installed on the beach and the hill, with a half-finished wharf carrying already a busy traffic. When the Americans landed at Iloilo in 1899 they took four days to do less than this, and the enemy made damaging use of the time.

Having landed, there was not a moment's rest till a flying column was on the move towards the railway on the other side of the peninsula, for a great deal depended on making a speedy dash for it before the enemy could collect his forces. From Pitsuwo in a straight line to the nearest point on the opposite coast is a little over twenty miles. The north coast is deeply indented: there is a big, rambling gulf called, on British charts, Society Bay, and in Chinese, Fuchow Bay, from the principal city of that region. One arm of this bay runs inland for several miles, and is called by foreigners Port Adams, and in Chinese Puliang Wan; at the head of the inlet is the town of Puliang-hsien, where the railway passes from Port Arthur and Kinchow to go north. The Japanese pronunciation of Puliang-hsien is Furanten. The landing at Pitsuwo meant plainly an attack on the railway at Puliang, and so, as the Russians had hurried away to give the alarm, it was essential to be close on their heels. The

hills here are nothing serious, as the central Liaotung range dwindles almost to nothing. Information came through 'the usual channels' that the Russians were halting about halfway between Pitsuwo and Puliang, and that reinforcements were coming there. So as soon as the Japanese advance guard had taken their mid-day meal and rested a little, they moved out in the afternoon, the central column along the direct road, and two smaller parties by parallel routes right and left. By the regular method, advancing with all precautions against surprise, the force covered about half of the journey before 8 p.m., and then halted for supper, while a few scouts pushed on again a mile in front of the main body.

Just before midnight the Japanese found the Russians in the village of Sanshilipao, all asleep. There was not much of a fight; the Russians did not expect to be followed so quickly, and they did not know what was coming upon them. Their scouting seemed to have been nil. As soon as they were attacked they cleared out in the middle of the night towards Puliang. The Japanese only waited at Sanshilipao long enough for their scouts to make sure that all was safe ahead, and then they pressed on until daylight. It was a race, and nobody could think of sleeping. If they gave the Russians time, there would be a hornets' nest prepared in a few hours. There might be a dozen trains and a whole army corps speeding to Puliang in obedience to a telegram. But there was no such thing. When daylight dawned on Friday, May 6, it found the Japanese, rather fagged, but as eager as ever, in ambush along a low ridge overlooking Puliang, and no sign of Russians about. Some were

known to be in the town, but they were not moving.

Suddenly a train was seen coming from Port Arthur before the Japanese had had time to tear up any rails or pile rocks on the line. As the train drew near, going north, the Red Cross flag was seen fixed to the hand-rail on the end platform of a car. So there was no chance of a fight after all : the Japanese, wishing to get a glimpse of the Russians, stood out in the open as the train went past. Then (Russian trains are very slow) there was time to see that the train was crowded with troops—officers and men with their weapons, not sick men with bandages ; and it is not surprising that the Japanese opened fire, seeing what a trick was being played. Down dropped every Japanese into the grass and brought his sights to bear on the train. No curiosity now, but plain business—the business of killing men. The train was packed, overcrowded, and somebody must have been hit, but it soon passed out of sight. Later we were told that Viceroy Alexieff and his staff were in the train, and yet the Russians recorded a protest against the Japanese action in firing because there was a Red Cross flag on the train !

Efforts were made to tear up the rails as quickly as possible, but only a little had been accomplished when the Russians appeared in force, and there was some active fighting, on a small scale, for three days. Sometimes the Russians managed to regain possession of the line, effect repairs, and run a train or two ; and then the Japanese would come again in large numbers and attack the line at different places. By the 8th they had succeeded in breaking it up for a length of over three miles, and the Pitsuwo army was marching in

full strength south-west towards Kinchow. At the same time a strong reconnoitring party, with many far-reaching 'feelers,' was going north-east along the railway-line, keeping as nearly as possible in touch with the Russians who retired in that direction. And after a few days the furthest scouts on the north-east and east met some from the army that had landed at Takushan; and from that time there were a few men constantly coming and going between the northern-most wings of the Pitsuwo army and the Takushan army to scour the country thoroughly, and make sure the enemy was not coming back upon them unawares. The Takushan army was at first intended to guard General Kuroki's force from being attacked on its left flank as he advanced from Fengwhancheng towards Liaoyang; for it was known that the Russians had a large force at Tashichao, near Newchwang, under General Stackelberg. Later, the Takushan force came to co-operate more with General Oku's force on the railway; and, after capturing Puliang and making sure that the Russians in and about Port Arthur would stay in their fortified positions and not attempt any forward move, the three Japanese columns from Pitsuwo, Takushan, and Fengwhancheng moved forward, slowly but surely, all with the idea of converging on Liaoyang.

It has been stated that General Kuropatkin strongly advised the abandonment of Port Arthur as soon as Japan had proved the superiority of her naval force. The port was only useful as a naval base, and when that ceased to be an important consideration, there was no further use in side-tracking some 30,000 of the best troops; the men would be much more useful if they were free to take the field in any part of Manchuria,

for a movable force is far more useful generally than a fixture. But it has often been noted that Russia, as personified in the Tsar, or as represented by the men who advise him, has been lacking in resolution, in the faculty of deciding on a plan and keeping to it, or deciding on a man and standing by him. A perfectly mobile army in Liaotung under General Stoessel could have been very dangerous to the Japanese wherever they tried to land, or wherever they tried to leave the protection of their warships and march inland. It was just the absence of any such mobile army that made the task of the Japanese comparatively easy, so far as concerned the simultaneous advance from several points towards Liaoyang. But in order to make assurance doubly sure, to block the Port Arthur army in as completely as the fleet was blocked in, it was necessary to capture the narrow neck of land that joins the Port Arthur peninsula to the rest of Liaotung.

CHAPTER XIX

KINCHOW AND NANSHAN

The Port Arthur peninsula is about the size of the Isle of Man. The connecting link, the Isthmus of Kinchow, is, roughly, four miles square, a stretch of sand dunes with an occasional outcrop of rock. It does not lie square to the points of the compass, but about diagonally—*i.e.*, the seashore on both sides of the isthmus runs from north-east to south-west, the two coastlines being roughly parallel at the narrow part. At the northernmost corner of the square is the old city of Kinchow Fu. A Fu is a capital of a prefecture, which is more than a county, but less than a province. Kinchow, therefore, is strongly walled, and is situated in a commanding position, according to ancient ideas of strategic position, which are not necessarily wrong now. But the Russians chose to make their chief defence at the opposite corner of the square, and had fortified two hills, the chief one being Nanshan, or South Hill, at the southern end of the isthmus. A little further to the south-west they had a second fortified hill, Nankwanlien—Southern Outpost. The railway passed between the two, and the Russian trenches extended right across from water to water.

In front of the trenches, copying the Boers, the defenders had a very elaborate system of barbed wire

entanglements; stout wooden posts were driven firmly into the ground, at intervals of 10 feet, and barbed wire was criss-crossed over these, at 20 and again at 40 inches from the ground. This work was done over patches of ground about 100 yards square, the whole width of the isthmus; and narrow lanes were left between the patches, with explosive mines concealed underground—though the Japanese were by no means in ignorance of the fact; it is even said that some of the 'Chinese coolies' employed in digging the holes to plant the mines were Japanese soldiers disguised. However that may be, the information did come, and a heavy fall of rain, during the night before the battle, further revealed the danger, by washing away in several places the surface soil which had covered the mines or the wires leading to them. Behind the wire entanglements and mines there were lines of trenches, carefully roofed over with iron sheets, leaving only small spaces through which the men could aim their rifles. On the crest of the hill there were admirably constructed forts, with barrack buildings for about 20,000 men, and about sixty guns were mounted in the batteries. About twenty of the guns were of 6-inch calibre, and many shells fell at a range of 8,500 yards.

The fighting at and about Kinchow lasted nine days, commencing with a skirmish of scouts on the 18th, and finishing with the capture of the whole Russian position on May 26. The skirmish developed into a fierce fight at close quarters, between about a hundred on each side, and both parties lost heavily before they separated. The Japanese, in this encounter, observed that the enemy had a balloon moored to their principal

BATTLE OF KINCHOW OR NANSHAN.

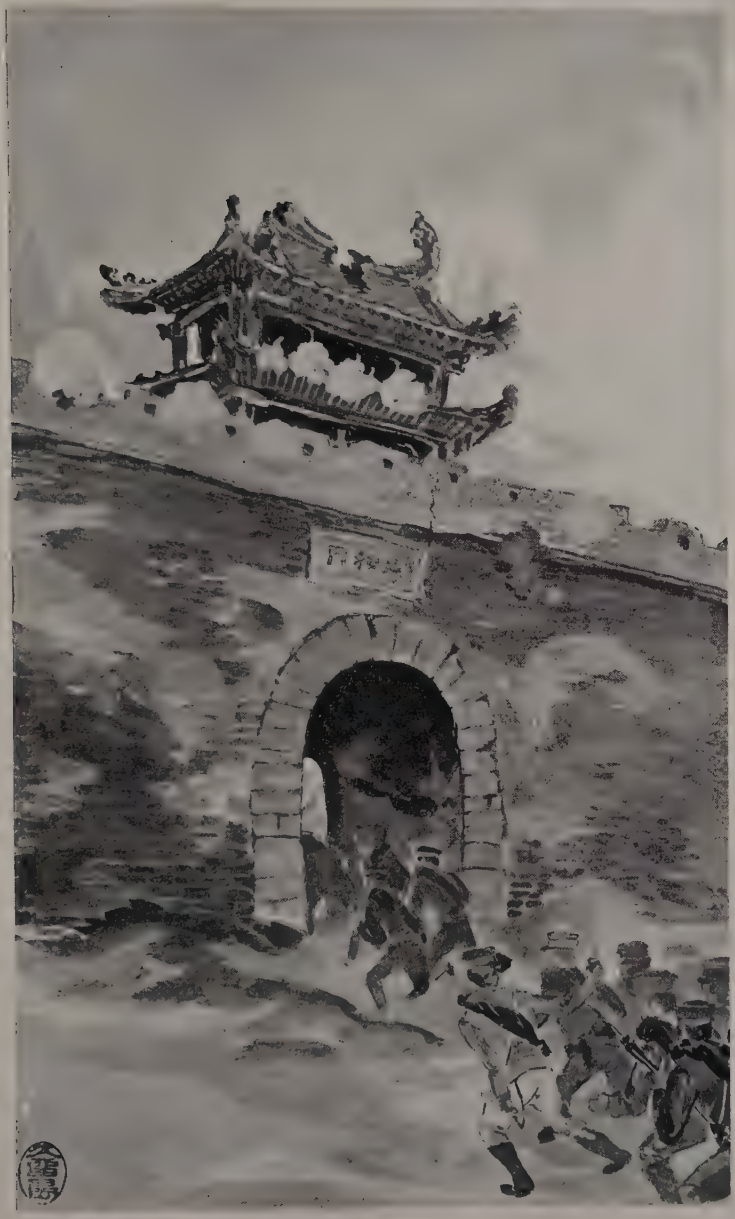
fort, and many shots were fired at it, but without effect. It helped the Russians to form an idea of the numbers of the enemy, but movements in the daytime were avoided as much as possible, and troops only went about at night, so that the Russians, after all, did not get much information. Contrary to the practice at the Yalu, the Russians made repeated sorties on a small scale with the intention of drawing the Japanese, but each attempt was repulsed without revealing the full strength of the attack. At night the Russians used electric searchlights and 'star-shells,' which burst like signal rockets and threw a bright light around. It was also ascertained that the different portions of the line of defence were all connected by telephone; and finally, there was a Russian gunboat in Talien Bay to support the land forces. Altogether, no more formidable position could be imagined.

General Oku planned to make an attack with the combined force of army and navy on the 25th, but there was such rough weather on that day that the gunboats could not come near the shore in Kinchow Bay, as they would have touched bottom in the heavy swell. There was therefore nothing done on the 25th except a good deal of long-range shelling from the land. When night came, the whole Japanese army, which had remained out of reach and chiefly out of sight of the Russians, began to march before midnight, and had arrived in the allotted positions for battle before 4 a.m. of the 26th. The first positions were on rising ground north-east of Kinchow City, about four miles away, at the foot of a high mountain which forms a landmark for many miles round. There were Russian outposts all along the foot-hills at the base of

this great mountain, and the advance of the Japanese was revealed by dogs barking in farmhouses along the route. The Russians, however, offered only slight resistance, and fell back towards Kinchow City. A little after midnight there was a heavy storm, and a drenching rain for over an hour. But, soaked to the skin and shivering with cold, the Japanese plodded on through the mud and the storm, knowing that it all helped to keep the enemy in ignorance and off his guard.

About 4 a.m. the main force of the Japanese passed by the city of Kinchow, a small section being detached to attack it, for it was occupied by a few Russian troops with some artillery that might do damage if not prevented. A body of Japanese sappers and miners crept forward, in the midst of the storm, and dug trenches within a quarter of a mile of the east gate of the city, and another party did the same near the south gate. Infantry then occupied the trenches, in readiness for a quick rush. Seven or eight of the engineers then undertook to creep up to the gate and blow it in with melinite. Stripping themselves nearly naked, so as to be as little impeded as possible, they made a dash, barefooted and without noise, right up to the gates, east and south being blown open almost at the same moment, with no casualties to the attacking force. The infantry rushed in at once, and the small force of Russians just managed to escape to Nanshan. The whole operation in and about the old city took less than an hour.

The attack on Nanshan was to have commenced before full daylight—namely, at 4.30 a.m.—but there was such a heavy mist after the rain that the start had to



RUSHING THE GATE OF KINCHOW AFTER THE ENGINEERS HAD BLOWN IT IN WITH MELINITE.

be an hour later. Even then the original programme could not be followed, for the gunboats which were to have helped were not able to come into the shallow bay until later. General Oku nevertheless ordered the army to proceed with the attack, and his chief assistant, Major-General Uchiyama, conducted the operations. The battle began, as usual, with artillery, and for three hours it was a furious cannonade all along the line. Part of the efforts of the Japanese gunners were directed to the task of striking and exploding the enemy's mines, and in this they were fairly successful, for some of the wires were cut, and some of the charges were blown up by Japanese shells.

The Russian gunners were under the usual disadvantage — their weapons would not carry quite far enough. For two or three hours it was noticed that hundreds of their shells were falling just two or three hundred yards too short; occasionally one would carry far enough, and fall right among the Japanese guns, but even then the Russian shells often did not explode. One of them did; it struck a cannon and killed several of the men who were working it. One man's head was taken clean off and thrown against the ammunition waggon behind; his arm fell near it, while his body was thrown down close to the gun. Several of his comrades were bespattered with blood and fragments of what had once been a man. The same shell somehow set fire to some carts near the gun, and there was danger of the ammunition being ignited, till an artilleryman, at imminent risk of being blown to pieces, sprang to the spot and put out the fire with a blanket. It was not till he had done this, and resumed his place at the gun, that he and his

comrades noticed that he had three fingers missing ; they must have been torn off by the same shell, but in the heat of combat it is quite common to receive injury without knowing.

By nine o'clock it was found that the Russian artillery was almost silent, and some batteries had withdrawn from Nanshan to the hill behind it—Nankwanlien. This was taken as an indication that an infantry assault could be made, but it cost the Japanese many lives, and they could not get past the barbed wire. The Russians in their iron-covered entrenchments held their fire until the advancing Japanese were struggling among the entanglements, and then blazed volleys at them with terrible effect. The Japanese tried, again and again, with courage that could not be excelled ; but the odds were too heavy, and men were simply falling in heaps, none getting past the obstacles. The order was given for the infantry to wait, and the artillery moved forward to closer range for a fresh cannonade. The whole isthmus seemed to be on fire ; shrapnel burst by thousands, filling the air with death. The forts on the heights—ten or twelve separate works—were literally torn up by projectiles from the guns in the plain below, alongside the railway embankment, and from the gunboats in the bay. Some of the trenches were completely blown to pieces, iron roofs and all. In many parts of the position there was not a square yard of ground unfurrowed by shells ; yet there remained less battered places, where the Russians doggedly held out.

But, little by little, the Japanese forced their way up the steep face of the hill in spite of everything.

Company vied with company in creeping forward; a half-dozen men would volunteer to reach the barbed wire and cut it; two only would get there, and those two would be killed, but not before they had cut the wire. Another half-dozen men would immediately offer for the next bit of work, and with the same result. Others pressed on to dig up a few feet of earth as cover; a man could not outlive more than a score of strokes with pick or shovel, and then he would fall; but his work lived and served its purpose: his comrades stepped over his body, and were so much nearer the goal. In two companies of the 3rd Regiment all the officers and over half of the men fell, killed or wounded. One was shot in the leg and could not go a step further, but he managed to ply his rifle where he lay.

At last the determination of the Japanese began to tell. The Fourth Division, on the extreme right, was from Osaka, and from ancient times the Osaka soldiers had a bad name as failures. It is a proverb among the Japanese troops. Now was the chance for the 'Unlucky Fourth,' and in the end they gallantly wiped out their past. They waded across the head of Kinchow Bay to a position far round on the left flank of the Russians, where the defence was not so strong, as this style of attack had not been foreseen. Plunging and floundering through the water, sometimes up to the neck, at other times only up to the knee, under a hot fire of rifles and Maxims, these Osaka men ran the gauntlet over a mile of salt water, dyeing it with their blood as they went, but shouting defiantly their war-song—a new one composed in honour of the Yalu fight—'Easy to cross the River of Ai.' It was a deed

ranking with the battle of the Alma, and it established even more conclusively than the Yalu battle that the Japanese soldiers can claim full equality, not merely with some Europeans, but with the best Europe has to show.

The Russians saw the movement, and tried to move troops over to strengthen their left wing; but the gunboats did their work well at this critical juncture, and so raked the hilltops on that side that the Russians could only cower in their trenches and leave the flank weak. The gunboats did not come off unscathed. The gallant little *Chokai* was struck by a shell, which killed her Captain and wounded several others; the total naval casualties, however, were only nine.

This charge of the Osaka men through the water and up the hill decided the day. It was already sunset, and the men had been hard at work sixteen hours. General Uchiyama was on the point of ordering his troops to cease for the day when this turning movement was made, and immediately he urged the centre and left to press the charge once more. The Russians broke and fled, and were cut down as they ran. At some of the forts men fought at close quarters, bayonet to bayonet, and it was once again shown that, though the Russians have the advantage of size and weight, they are no match for the quicker and more skilful Japanese. By 7 p.m. the Japanese flag was hoisted on the first fort, and by 8 p.m. on all of them. The Japanese were too exhausted to do much pursuing. The Russians assembled at Sanshilipao railway-station, eight miles away, and went by train during the night to Port Arthur.

The Japanese captured 68 field-guns, 10 Maxims, an electric light apparatus and steam-engine to drive

the dynamo, about 50 explosive mines, a considerable quantity of ammunition of various kinds, and other supplies. About 100 prisoners were taken, mostly wounded. The total number of Japanese killed was 749, including 36 officers; wounded, 3,455, including 112 officers. The Russian dead left on the field, and buried with all respect by the Japanese, were 704, including 10 officers. How many dead were carried away, and how many wounded, could only be guessed. General Stoessel reported 1,300 killed, wounded, or missing.

During the fight, about 11 a.m., a Russian gunboat in Talien Bay inflicted considerable loss on the Japanese as they advanced along the isthmus. The gunboat also attempted to land a force in five boats, but the Japanese were able to repel the attempt.

At the close of the day the Japanese found well-appointed kitchens in the Russian forts, and in each case there was food that had been abandoned during cooking. The Japanese had had no food all day, except what they had in their knapsacks and managed to eat at odd times in the rests between charges. When the battle was over, they made a truly Spartan meal of stale boiled rice from the previous day, now cold and dry, and most of them were so hungry that they could not wait to get it reboiled.

Among the Japanese officers killed was the son of General Nogi, one of the principal actors in the Port Arthur campaign of ten years ago. The General was just leaving Japan for the front when he received the news about his son; he ordered that there should be no funeral ceremonies, no mourning, until the end of the war, when his other son and himself would also be among the mourners or the mourned.

General Stoessel, in his report of the battle, says that it had been his intention to abandon Nanshan. If so, the intention showed bad generalship, for such a position certainly ought to have been held at all costs. It was of vital importance as the gateway to Port Arthur, the only way by which a Japanese army could attack the stronghold or Stoessel himself ever hope to emerge and take his part in the fighting further north. If he had been able to hold Nanshan and Kinchow, he could have been of great service to the other Russian armies, by attacking the Japanese from the south in conjunction with attacks from the north. Having failed in that, his whole army was practically lost to Russia for the rest of the war. General Stoessel also alleged that the guns which he lost were chiefly 'old pieces taken from the Chinese in 1900.' It is true that some of the guns were taken from the Chinese, but they were of the most modern type, of high power, and in perfect order. They were every bit as good as the Russians' own guns, otherwise it is certain that such a good General as Stoessel would not have been using them at a place of such importance. He should have added that the machine-guns, which did the most deadly execution of all among the enemy, were among the captures from the Chinese, and were the latest pattern of Maxims. One reason why they proved so effective was that the Russians had placed large stones at various parts of the field, and measured the distances precisely, long before the battle; and it was when the Osaka men deployed through the sea, where there was nothing to show the range, that the Russians were beaten.

It seems quite certain that the Russians only

intended to retire when absolutely driven. And therein they show that their so-called policy of retirement is no policy at all. It is a perfectly sound manœuvre to retire before a stronger enemy, if there is a chance to draw him into a position where his greater strength will avail him less ; or to tire him out, or to waste and weaken his force by continuous harassing ; or to delay a big action until the defence can be strengthened. But none of these conditions were fulfilled in this case. No better place than Nanshan could be wished. The Japanese attack was certainly under greater disadvantages than would probably be found again ; the wasting or weakening or tiring was nothing to the Japanese, with a country full of eager soldiers behind them ; but it was a serious matter for Stoessel, cut off from the world. And the loss of so many of Krupp's best cannon was a very real loss, just as their original acquisition by Russia from China had been a real gain.

It is difficult to imagine any device of modern war that was not in use at Nanshan—the railway, to bring men and supplies from the base to the battlefield ; telegraphs and telephones, to convey orders quickly ; a captive balloon, to reconnoitre the eneny's positions ; mine-fields and barbed-wire network ; iron-roofed trenches ; searchlights and illuminating 'star-shells' ; the ranges marked, and the approach from one direction only. Moreover, there had been three months and a half since the war began, and three weeks clear since the landing at Pitsuwo. If Russian troops could be driven from such a position, in such circumstances, by the Japanese, it seemed perfectly certain that nothing at all could ever give Russia the victory.

CHAPTER XX

THE BATTLE OF TELISSU

The hesitation and indecision of the Russians led to a worse disaster two weeks later. There had been large numbers of troops in Liaotung before May 1. When General Sassulitch was defeated on the Yalu, it was thought Liaoyang was in immediate danger, so the Liaotung troops were hastily drawn back as far as Tashichao, near Newchwang, to support Kuropatkin in the mountain region between the Yalu and Liao Rivers. Then Kuropatkin reported, with some surprise, that 'the movements of Kuroki on the road from Fengwhancheng towards Liaoyang lack decisiveness,' and the Russians seem to have concluded that the Fengwhancheng army was not going to be dangerous. So the Russian army at Tashichao, under General Stackelberg, returned southward, in the hope of catching General Oku napping and assailing him from north and south simultaneously. Had this march of Stackelberg been arranged to coincide with a strong sortie from Port Arthur, it would have been probably serious for the Japanese. But the capture of Kinchow and Nanshan had been so quickly accomplished that the Tashichao army came too late. Oku was free to cope with it, and the weakening of Russia's forces along the Fengwhancheng-Liaoyang line was immediately

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JAPANESE ARTILLERY ON THE WAY TO LIAOYANG.

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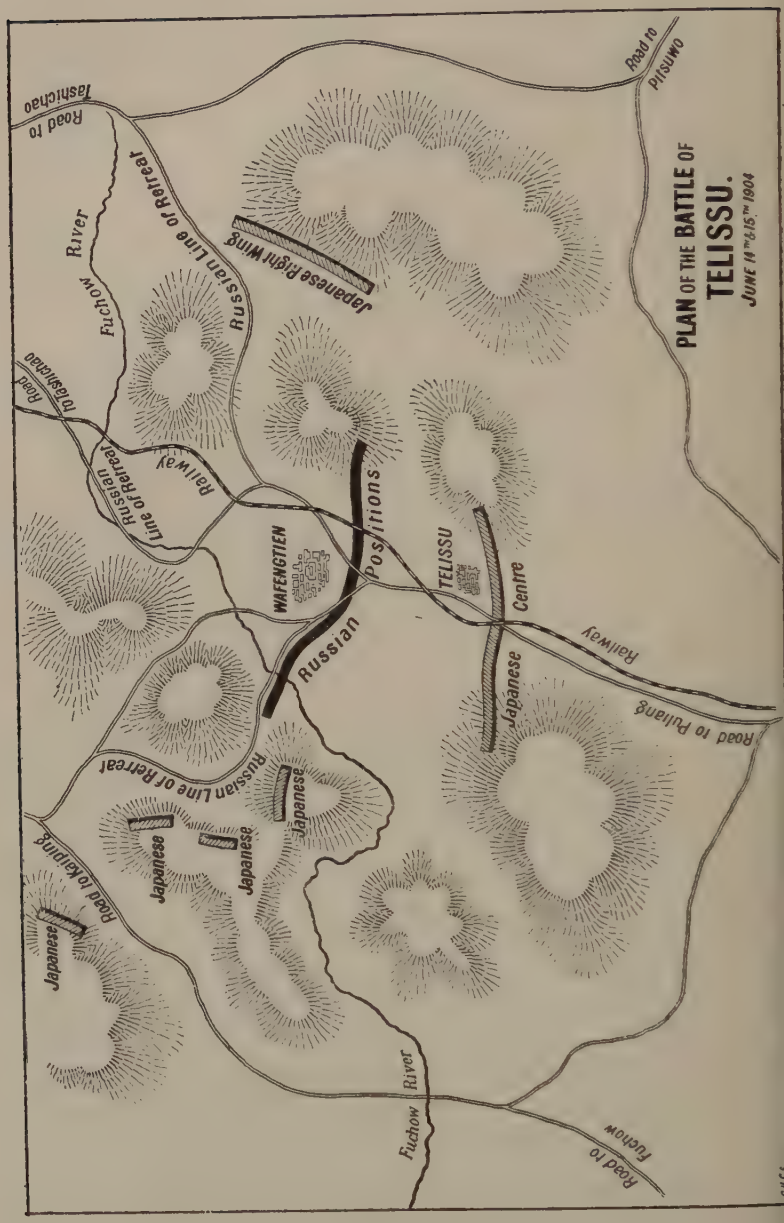
COSSACKS DISCUSSING THE SITUATION.

perceived by Kuroki. He suddenly dropped all the 'lack of decisiveness,' for he had only been waiting, either for his own colleagues in Liaotung to have time to come up or for the Russians to make some bad move that would give him an opening.

General Oku merely took the neck of the isthmus for General Nogi and a fresh army to hold it, the newcomers being allotted the task of closing in on Port Arthur, while Oku was to wheel north and follow the railway-line up the peninsula to co-operate ultimately with Kuroki's armies of Takushan and Fengwhancheng. Thus, in the first week of June, there were Japanese troops marching along fifty different roads, converging in a northerly direction. To save time and effort, some forces were taken round by sea into the Gulf of Liaotung, and landed at Fuchow and other points on the north shore of the peninsula. The way the different parts of the Japanese kept in constant touch with each other and with the base was wonderful; it was like all the muscles in the fingers of a human hand, controlled from the wrist: wherever one part came in contact with anything, all the others seemed to close in automatically. The south-west half of Liaotung was covered with a perfect network of Japanese columns, some large and some small, making their way along the valleys and over mountain paths, near the coast and the railway, though there was no very large force visible to the Russians, for the country is more and more mountainous after leaving Kinchow.

The most important fact of all was that the Russians seem to have deliberately deceived themselves as to the Japanese army's condition and movements. The official report of the Nanshan fight, as published in


PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF
TELISSU.
JUNE 14TH & 15TH 1904
Road to Tashichao
Fuchow River
Russian Line of Retreat
Japanese Right Wing
Road to Haicheng
Road to Liaoyang
Road to Fuchow
Road to Pulantien
Railway
Russian Line of Retreat
Railway
WAFENGTIEN
Russian Positions
TELISSU
Japanese Centre
Japanese
Japanese
Japanese
Japanese
Fuchow River

St. Petersburg, stated that the Japanese casualties were at least 15,000, and that General Oku was unable to do anything of importance, while the daily skirmishes of scouts along the railway-line to the north of Kinchow and Puliang were represented by the Russians as easy victories. Consequently the Russian force pressed forward with the more confidence and less caution. No information about the overwhelming numbers of Japanese waiting behind the hills was allowed to leak out, and the Russian scouting again failed to reveal the truth, while, for the sake of maintaining Russia's prestige in Europe, reports were published daily in St. Petersburg about the great column that was going to relieve Port Arthur. As early as June 7 telegrams were coming to Japan from Europe, quoting the opinions of German and other military critics that the Port Arthur relief expedition, then so much talked about, was doomed to failure. This pointedly illustrates how valuable Press despatches may be to an enemy in giving him the benefit of so many expert opinions, from which, if he chooses, he may undoubtedly learn something, if only to confirm his own information and deductions. In contrast, about the same time General Kuropatkin was telegraphing that 'The Japanese have been checked near Wafengtien railway-station, thirty miles north of Puliang, with considerable loss'; and again, 'There has been no continuation of the Japanese advance.' If he had known the truth—that the Japanese were advancing all the time on several roads to outflank the Russians—he might have averted a great defeat. But the Japanese maintained their censorship particularly well at this juncture, and despite the fact that the Press of the

whole world has complained so bitterly, there is no doubt that one of the principal factors in the success of Japan has been her secrecy, not only as to coming events, but also as to accomplished facts which might have afforded clues.

On June 13 the Japanese main army moved north from the neighbourhood of Puliang (Port Adams) in three columns, one keeping near to the railway and the others by different roads, more or less parallel, in the hills on each flank. There was also a large force from Fuchow, traversing some extremely hilly country, where the Russians seemed to have no outposts at all. Finally there was a cavalry column from Pitsuwo, advancing nearly at right angles to the main line of the Japanese advance. By the 14th the Japanese had formed a nearly complete horse-shoe round the Russian position, which was chiefly at Wafengtien. But the formation was not complete, as some of the roads over the mountains proved even more troublesome than had been anticipated. The Russian army had come chiefly on foot, using the railway to bring heavy artillery, ammunition, food-supplies and baggage, reinforcements, etc. As the object of the Russian march was to reach and relieve Port Arthur quickly, and to rush upon the army of General Oku while it was supposed to be suffering from the exhausting effects of its recent fight, there was not an extensive flank movement, General Stackelberg thinking it more important to push on by the side of the railroad with little more than vedettes among the hills on each side. It was a fatal blunder.

The fighting began on the afternoon of the 14th, with artillery, the Japanese only revealing their central

column at the small village of Telissu (pronounced Tokuriji in Japanese), three miles south-east of Wafengtien. The Russians spread out to form a semicircle round the enemy's positions on the hills behind the village. Repeatedly the Russians charged, preceding each advance with a heavy bombardment, and then making resolute efforts to break through the Japanese lines. They did not get through, but they forced them back, General Oku withdrawing to higher ground and entrenching himself strongly, to wait for his horse-shoe movement to mature. At the close of the 14th the Russians had gained a little ground and rested for the night. But reinforcements were being sent from the north by train and on foot, and General Oku could not afford to wait for the Russians to get a large army into position. He moved his men forward in the night, with orders to commence a general attack at daylight.

The chief features of the battlefield may be roughly likened to the capital letter **A**. The right or east side of the letter represents the line of railway, the other side a very straggling river which runs into the sea at Fuchow, and the cross-piece of the **A** is the Russian position. The Japanese main force was on the railway; one wing from Fuchow was to come round on the far side of the river, and the other wing from Pitsuwo was to make a détour right round to the head of the **A**. The extent of the whole operations must have been about six or seven miles each way. The river-bed zigzags, as all mountain streams do, and steep hills rise on all sides and in all shapes, as many, though only about one-fifth as high, as in an Alpine scene. This made it easy to keep the infantry well

sheltered in glens and ravines, and difficult for artillery to make much effect.

All the forenoon the battle raged, and the Japanese right and centre were hard pressed, General Oku having twice to strengthen them from his reserves. They held their ground against the most determined assaults of the Russian infantry, and by 11 a.m. the Fuchow column began to attack the enemy's right wing. The Russians had to give some of their attention in that direction, and soon found that the Japanese were climbing up the steep hills on their flank, despite the fiercest fire. But there were constant new arrivals of Russian troops from the north, and General Stackelberg was content to let his right wing be hotly pressed for a time, while he concentrated all his attention on General Oku's extreme right. It was not until afternoon that the Japanese cavalry from Pitsuwo made its way over the mountain passes, to threaten the left and rear of the Russians. At this new development General Stackelberg decided that the position was untenable; his second in command, General Gerngross, was severely wounded, and the whole army was in imminent danger of being surrounded. About 3 p.m. he gave the order for a general retreat.

Owing to the narrowness of the valleys, the Russians could not keep together in retiring, but had to make their way along three different mountain glens. By this time the Japanese wing columns were in full possession of many positions on the heights, and the Russians had to run the gauntlet in the valleys below. Their losses were thus unusually heavy. The Japanese were too exhausted, as well as too cautious, to attempt

JAPANESE TELEPHONE AT WORK DURING THE BATTLE OF TELISSU.

much in the way of pursuing in such broken country, but on the following day they came across several portions of the Russian force, lost among the hill tracks, and killed and captured many. The Russian artillery had a narrow escape; there were altogether ninety-eight guns in action, and most of them were just carried away in time by train, but fourteen of the best type of quick-firing guns had to be left behind, and fell into the hands of the Japanese. One of their regimental flags was also taken, besides forty-six waggon-loads of ammunition, comprising over 1,000 shells and nearly 40,000 rifle cartridges, about 1,000 rifles, and an enormous quantity of engineering and other warlike supplies. The number of Russians buried on the battlefield was officially reported by General Oku to be 1,854, besides which there were very large numbers of dead found later in the many hillside ravines which had been searched by the Japanese fire when the Russians retreated. The Russian official report placed the killed, wounded, and missing at 3,413, and as the Japanese took 300 or 400 prisoners there is not much real difference in the two versions.

CHAPTER XXI

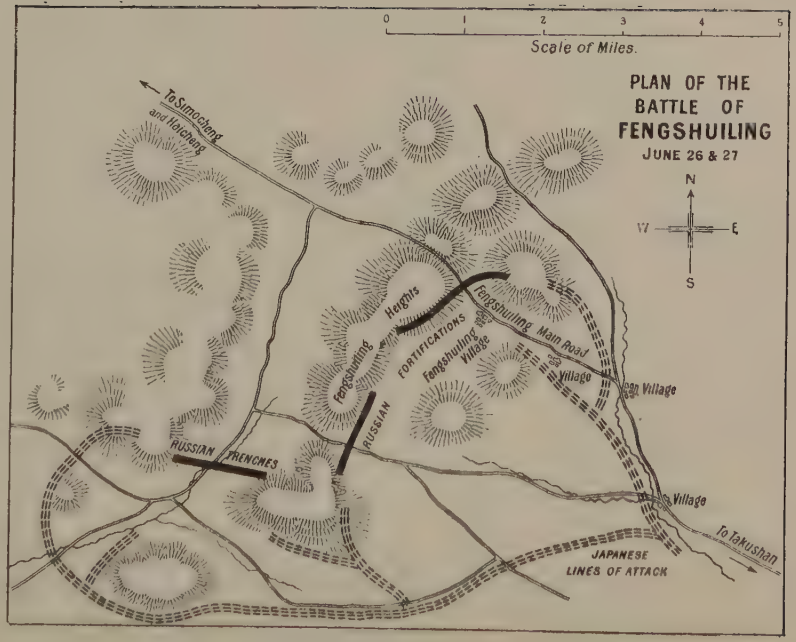
THE CAPTURE OF THE PASSES

As soon as it became apparent that the Russians were trying to relieve Port Arthur, the Japanese decided to press their advance in the north, instead of waiting for General Oku's main force to march along the Liaotung Peninsula first. The Japanese army at Takushan had been feeling its way carefully, keeping in close touch with Kuroki on its right and Oku on its left, and co-operating with both. The main road from Takushan to Newchwang goes over a high pass called Fengshuiling, and then descends to Haicheng and Tashichao, on the railway. There was no large Russian force in this region at all, but many small engagements occurred from day to day, the Japanese never revealing the presence of their large army, and the Russians never making sufficiently strong resistance to require any great display of force. In all cases the quickness of the Japanese was a great factor in deciding the result; they proved over and over again that they are adepts at turning a position, eluding observation until they are ready, and then concentrating on points where they are least expected.

This enveloping and concentrating style of attack gradually forced the Russians back at all points, until on June 26 the Fengshuiling Pass itself was forced.

The Russians had fortified the pass, which is guarded on the north side by very high mountains, with precipitous slopes, partly covered with pine forests. To the south there are less inaccessible hills and several paths over them, more or less parallel with the main Fengshuiling road. The Russians had small forces guarding two of these passes, supporting their main position. The Japanese occupied several days and nights in reconnoitring, until they found a path over the hills unguarded by the enemy. This path led to two glens on the other side of the rocky hilltops, both of which debouched on the rear of the right flank of the enemy, at points two miles apart, separated by long hog-back ridges covered with forest. To the Japanese it was almost child's play to work a regiment of cavalry up these rocky mountain footpaths in the night, and get far round behind the Russian positions, and another force, with infantry and Maxims and mountain artillery, along the nearer of the two wooded glens. At the same time a regiment of infantry, discarding the regulation foreign-style boots and taking to the typical Japanese straw sandals, scaled the seemingly inaccessible mountains guarding the northern side of Fengshuiling, to get round the Russians on the other side. These operations took the whole night of the 25th-26th and a good part of the day following, before the men were all in position for a general attack —a fact which speaks volumes for the officers' accurate knowledge of the ground, distances, and times it would take, and all the minute details required to calculate the attack correctly.

The Japanese force which was to make the frontal attack kept up a severe bombardment all day long on


0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale of Miles.
PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF FENGSHUILING
JUNE 26 & 27
N
W
E
S
To Simocheng and Haicheng
Heights
Fengshuiling
FORTIFICATIONS
Fengshuiling Village
Fengshuiling Main Road
Village
Village
RUSSIAN TRENCHES
RUSSIAN
Village
To Takushan
JAPANESE LINES OF ATTACK

the 26th, with the object of keeping the Russians fully occupied ; and on the morning of the 27th a general attack was ordered, beginning with an advance in front of Fengshuiling. The Russians had masked batteries on the heights, partly screened by trees, and also had the ranges marked all over the valley. It was therefore well-nigh impossible to make any headway, and it was fortunate that the encircling movements proved successful just in time. By seven o'clock in the morning the Russians found they were nearly surrounded, and were in fact being fired on from practically every hilltop around them. The whole country is a sea of rocky, pine-tufted crests, and there were Japanese everywhere, performing impossible feats of mountaineering, and shooting all the while. The Russians had to shift their cannon before eight o'clock, as their artillerymen were being 'potted' from the rear ; and, once the artillery stopped firing and began to retire, the Japanese pressed their frontal attack with renewed energy, while the Russian infantry became disheartened and soon demoralized.

Soon after eight o'clock the Russians began to waver at all points. The Japanese crept forward along gullies and canyons, then out into the open valley and across the fields into the village of Fengshuiling, while the Japanese artillery away on the hills to the south raked the whole length of the Russian trenches and batteries. By ten o'clock the enemy had fled headlong, leaving in flames several sheds full of provisions, fodder, etc. There were about 150 dead bodies found in various parts of the valley and the rocky defiles leading out of it, and nearly a hundred wounded were picked up and given every care. From these it was

found that the defending force had consisted of regiments from the Baikal, Yenisei, and Irkutsk organizations, being partly European troops and partly local levies, to the total number of about 12,000 men, with 800 cavalry, 32 field-guns and 2 Maxims; and, in addition, there had been reinforcements on the morning of the defeat, too late to be of real use, to the extent of 1,500 infantry and 8 guns. The total Japanese casualties were about 170, chiefly in the frontal attack, where the enemy's forts were protected by extensive wire entanglements and abattis, enfiladed by machine-gun fire. The total Japanese force was not officially made known, but may probably be placed at about 20,000.

The small number of casualties on both sides was due entirely to the skill of the Japanese in getting into positions which practically decided the issue as soon as they showed themselves. Once the Russians retired, pursuit was difficult and dangerous on account of the nature of the country. The Japanese contented themselves with continuing their own careful and widely-extended advance on the heels of the enemy, and harrying his rear, when opportunity offered, along the road to Hsimocheng or Tomuching. It was not desired to do too much at once; the general scheme of operations had, above all, to harmonize and synchronize with those to the north-east and south-west. General Nozu was in command of the Takushan army, but he was not in command of the campaign. He was instructed from Tokyo, step by step, and his own share in the work was limited to the correct execution of each step as it was indicated to him. Having captured the forts guarding the pass, and

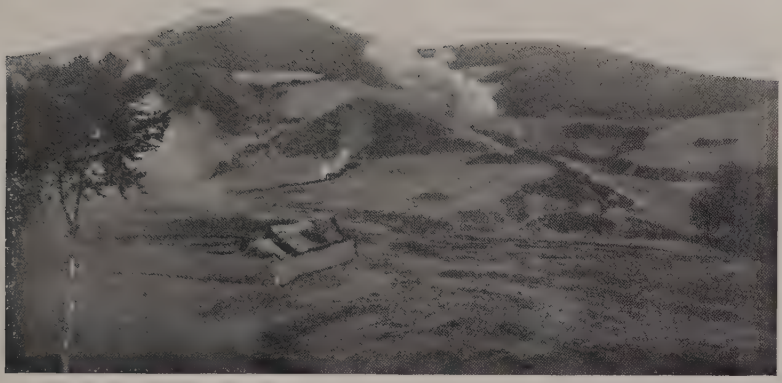


Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

'NOT MUCH TO SEE, BUT VERY DANGEROUS FOR THOSE PRESENT.'

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

ONE OF THE RUSSIAN GUNS WHICH FIRED THE SHELLS SHOWN BURSTING ABOVE.

having seen the enemy safely off the premises, he simply wired to Tokyo, and waited for the next stage.

At the same time that Fengshuiling was taken, General Oku, on the south, was pressing the Russians back along the line of railway, and had an engagement at Shungyocheng, twenty miles south of Tashichao; and General Kuroki, in the north, was capturing two passes of even more importance than Fengshuiling—namely, Motienling and Taling. These were captured even more easily, though they ought to have been defended at all costs. The Russian plan seems to have been merely to have outposts guarding all the paths over the high mountain range that separates the valleys of the Yalu and the Liao; the roads up into the passes are steep and exceedingly bad—not better than the merest paths—and there had been excessive rain during the last three or four weeks. This may be the reason why the Russians had not moved any considerable force into these places. It was even said that there had been strong bodies of troops placed there at first, but they were reduced as the Japanese did not seem inclined to attack, and it was very difficult to keep troops up there, to send supplies and keep in communication with them. The Japanese, therefore, had no difficulty in following their usual tactics. They advanced along several different roads simultaneously, sending only small advance guards to keep in communication with the enemy and divert his attention until the principal bodies of Japanese could climb all over the hills unknown to the Russians, and then by a sudden simultaneous attack easily win the day. In every case the Russians were outnumbered, and had not been at all aware what was coming upon them.

Motienling in particular was an ideal place for defence. It ought to be impregnable, if properly held, and it was expected to prove another Shipka. But the Russians made less effort here than the Turks in 1876 did against them. General Kuropatkin's official report feebly said: 'Our cavalry and infantry, while retiring under pressure of the Japanese, ascertained that the attack on each of the three passes was made by a superior force.'

This sort of information was doubtless very useful and interesting, but it neither won battles for Russia nor showed how they might be won. The one hope and boast of Russia was in her weight of numbers. It was now high time that these should begin to tell. Since October, 1903, when the time arrived for withdrawal from Manchuria, she was supposed to be ready, if her great men knew their business; and from the beginning of February she had been at war. Now, it was the 26th and 27th of June when the three important passes in the mountains were taken from her with comparative ease, and at the same time an attack was pressed on the railway-line. It was as if Wellington's famous 'thin red line' at Waterloo had been simultaneously attacked by three columns coming at right angles on its front, and by a fourth crushing in its extreme right. In such a case, it is probable that even a Wellington would have been defeated; it is so probable, that it is certain he would never have let himself get into such a plight. According to the expectations formed of Russia's vast numbers of troops, there ought to have been several different columns hovering about the Korean border, ready to take General Kuroki in the right flank and rear. As a

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

GENERAL KUROPATKIN SCANNING THE PASSES THROUGH A TELESCOPE.

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GENERAL OKASAKA, THE HERO OF MOTIENLING.

matter of fact, Kuroki's scouts, and the spies beyond the scouts' range, had made sure that there was no Russian force of any importance in that part of the world, and no big movement towards that region from Liaoyang. As for any Russian troops from the Vladivostok district getting over the 'Korean Alps' to attack Kuroki's line, that was found to be completely out of the range of practical possibilities.

In short, the Russian armies were outnumbered, their generals were outmanœuvred, and their abilities outclassed at every point. The capacity of the Siberian Railway to flood Manchuria with overwhelming numbers of troops had been proved utterly disappointing; and that was Russia's one hope. In effect, Kuropatkin reported from day to day: 'We have not enough men at any point; we cannot get men quickly enough to hold our own anywhere, and we are not clever enough to win against odds.' It would be naturally asked, What was the use of continuing the war? The answer is that General Kuropatkin was confident there would be a change in the odds sooner or later; the Japanese would be further from the sea, and so it would be a greater drain on their numbers and strength to maintain their communications and keep the army supplied at such a distance; while the Russians would find correspondingly less drain on their fighting power from similar causes as they retired. Moreover, the mountain-climbing tactics in which the Japanese had so easily beaten their foes, accustomed to wide, level steppe country, would soon be a thing of the past, when the fighting came into the Liaotung plains: then the dashing masses of Cossack cavalry would play their part. At first Kuropatkin thought

the neighbourhood of Tashichao and Haicheng, both within about forty miles of Newchwang, would be a suitable place for a decisive action on these lines. As the Japanese showed their hand, and threatened to attack in great force further north, he had no option but to change his plan and concentrate towards the north. His policy remained unchanged, but the scene of action had to depend on circumstances. In spite of defeats at different places, the fact remained that Russia's hope and strength lay in her numbers, and a place must be found where these could be effective. If it meant retiring a thousand miles and waiting two years, still it should be done. Meantime, every opportunity was to be utilized for the wearing-down of the Japanese strength by stubborn fights along each line of retreat. It might prove possible to regain some of the lost ground ; it could only be ascertained by actually trying how soon the Japanese would feel the weakness caused by distance from their base. There must at some stage come a turning-point when the odds would be in Russia's favour.

With this idea a determined attempt was made on July 17 to retake the Motienling Pass from the Japanese. General Count Keller, copying the tactics of the Japanese, chose a night of rain and very heavy mists, and moved his men out silently into the hills. He had about 30,000 troops, and carefully planned a series of simultaneous advances over about eight miles of hills, different columns to creep along the glens and ravines extending in all directions on each side of the principal pass. There are two other passes—the Shoko on the north-east and the Shinkai on the south-west—and numerous other paths intersecting the valleys and

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

RUSSIANS SCALING THE HILLS NEAR MOTIENLING.

hillsides in all directions. The 'roads' are hardly anything better than river-beds, and to a great extent that is exactly what they are. Only the main Motienling road is fairly good. At the highest point of the pass the Japanese had entrenchments near the hilltops, and 3,000 or 4,000 men encamped a little behind the ridge, within easy call, while a small outpost occupied some huts and trenches in the valley just beyond the pass, towards Liaoyang. Sentries were posted two or three hundred yards further, and in the trenches and huts there were about 500 men, sleeping under arms, ready to turn out the moment an alarm sounded.

About 3 a.m. the Russians suddenly appeared, charging the outpost in the dark so quickly that some of the men rushed out of the huts partly dressed, and found themselves immediately in the thick of a hand-to-hand conflict. There was not much firing of rifles, for it was too dark and foggy. For fifteen minutes there was desperate struggling with sword and bayonet and clubbed rifle, while the Japanese at the summit sent down the order to the outpost to retire up the pass; then firing became general all along the line of hilltops, and it was found that the Russians were attacking at various points. They failed to surround the Japanese positions, and, as their frontal attacks were kept up till daylight, the Japanese were easily able to repel them completely. The little outpost where the fight started was a perfect slaughter-house, the huts, trenches, the ground, and the trees and boulders being spattered with blood. But there were few casualties elsewhere, the total on the Japanese side being under a hundred for the whole engagement, while the Russians lost a few more.

The repulse was followed up promptly by the Japanese, and a general advance was ordered all along the line—from the shores of the Liaotung Gulf right over the hills into the heart of Manchuria, a front of over 150 miles. On July 19 the army of General Keller was driven further west from Motienling in confusion and with the loss of over 1,000 men, while there were smaller fights in progress at twenty other points, from Kaiping on the sea-coast to Hsihoyen, which is within thirty miles of Liaoyang and within fifty of Moukden itself. Fighting went on continuously in all parts of this line for over a week, the Russians being driven back on every road. They resisted stubbornly, but in vain. In every part of the hills the Japanese managed to find some weak spot in the Russian defences, and get round them.

On July 22 and 23 General Oku, on the extreme south, closed in upon Tashichao from four different roads, and the Russians had to retire with all haste. It is not easy at a few hours' notice to get 40,000 men and corresponding quantities of stores out of a town, and the Russian rear-guard had to keep the Japanese at bay as long as possible. In the end the Russians had to abandon a large quantity of food-supplies. Their casualties in the series of engagements about Tashichao were over 2,000. At the same time that General Oku was pressing from the south, Tashichao was menaced by the Japanese army which had come viâ the Fenshuiling Pass. It had routed a force of Russians at Hsimocheng, about twenty miles east of Tashichao. This accounted for the rapid retirement from Tashichao. On August 1 General Keller, in the Motienling neighbourhood, again made a desperate

attempt to force the Japanese back, but was repulsed with tremendous loss, and the General himself died next day from his wounds. The total Russian casualties in these mêlées could not be ascertained exactly, as dead bodies often lay in ditches or otherwise unobserved for a long time after the fighting; but in Hsimocheng there must have been nearly 1,000 killed, and at Yasuling, where Keller was killed, it is known that there were over 2,000 Russians killed or picked up badly wounded after their army had gone.

This was practically the last of the Russians' attempts to make a forward movement. St. Petersburg had undoubtedly been insisting that General Kuropatkin ought to be able to beat in detail such a very widespread army as the Japanese. It was always Napoleon's great feat to win battles, even against far superior numbers, by drawing his forces together and hurling a mass upon some part of the enemy's force before the other parts could come to help. If Kuropatkin had as many as 200,000 men, he ought to have been able to crush Kuroki in the north or Oku in the south—so, apparently, it was believed in St. Petersburg. But the 200,000 could not be massed at one point. That is where the lack of a Napoleon showed. Such massing as Kuropatkin was able to accomplish the Japanese answered by superior massing. Telissu was one striking example; Motienling was another. After that, General Kuropatkin made no more serious efforts to attack, but devoted himself entirely to the task of preparing for a great fight at Liaoyang, and meantime keeping up all along the line just enough resistance to delay and hamper the Japanese advance, without incurring much real loss on the Russian side.

CHAPTER XXII

THE DEFENCE OF PORT ARTHUR

General Stoessel's brave defence of Port Arthur has won the praise of the whole world, Japan included. Every artifice of modern warfare has been used to strengthen the naturally strong position, and every inch of ground has been contested to the last. The whole story of the siege would make a most interesting book in itself. At the time of writing (September) it is still in progress. The Japanese authorities have issued a sweeping order that no news whatever is to be published about Port Arthur. They are tired of having the proceedings criticised while still in progress. This veto is very effective, but not absolutely so, for information contrives to leak out in various ways. The supplies of food in Port Arthur were said to be enough for four years, yet it is certain that extraordinary efforts have been made to get food sent up from Shanghai, Chefoo, and elsewhere, by Chinese junks ; and it must be inferred that there is need of supplies. Ammunition is still plentiful. Every day and every night there are fierce fights among the innumerable hills surrounding the citadel. It is usual to call Port Arthur the 'Gibraltar of the East,' but these hills all round it belie the title, for Gibraltar's strength is in its isolation.

Port Arthur is not one citadel, but fifty, and each one of its many fortresses may be taken singly and used against the others. In a semicircle of nearly ten mile's diameter there is hardly anything else but military works, lofty forts, crowning pinnacle hills 300 and 500 feet high, and some redoubts near the Laoteshan Cape nearly 1,000 feet high; with dry moats, 30 feet deep, traversing the lowlands in every direction, to foil all attacks. Barbed-wire entanglements cover the country for miles, and wide stretches of bare ground have been buried a foot deep in some sort of fine, powdery white ash, which is stirred up into a thick cloud when trodden on, so that an approaching enemy makes a splendid target for machine-guns. There are buried mines, some to explode automatically when a foot presses the soil over them, others not to explode till a look-out man on a distant fort presses a button. At night searchlights flash across every yard of the country near the line of forts; and sometimes the Russian gunboats, creeping along the shore outside the harbour, under cover of the big batteries on the cliffs, get far enough to pour a cross-fire into the Japanese camps in the valleys beyond the line of attack before the Japanese ships have time to dash in and drive the Russian boats back to harbour.

And while Admiral Togo's squadron, seven months at sea and still tireless, vigilant, keen as ever, day and night continues sending in from long range those terrible Shimose shells, worse than lyddite, on the battered town, the forts, the outposts, the Japanese troops, with patient and devoted heroism, keep on creeping forward, burrowing underground, digging deep trenches that zigzag towards the enemy's lines.

Slowly, laboriously the Japanese tunnel into the slopes under the Russian forts, and literally inch by inch they forge ahead, till near enough to emerge and make a rush—only to fall in heaps, dying and dead—and their brothers have to try again. In many places the ground is solid rock and the Japanese cannot countermine; but, little by little, masses of rock and bags filled with sand are collected in some corner out of sight of the Russians, and are suddenly rushed forward in the night, to make temporary shelter where a regiment can get forward a hundred yards, rest, fire for a few minutes, and get forward another hundred yards, till at last they are close up to the enemy. Then a charge in the teeth of fierce rifle fire, and only a few Japanese survive it; but they reach the top of the hill somehow, for it is wonderful how many bullets can miss. At the top there is a row of pits 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep, each containing a huge Krupp gun that pokes its muzzle over the edge; the gun-pits are connected by sunk roadways, with magazine and soldiers' quarters all underground, connected by tunnels or open galleries on the side of the hill away from the enemy. Here there is not room for a large number of infantry to defend the place against storming parties, and if the assailants cannot be prevented from getting up the hill, the place is theirs—for the time. As soon as the Russians in the other forts can make out what has happened, they pour their heaviest shells into the open rear of the captured battery, and may annihilate the victors in the moment of triumph.

But it seems to be true, as Napoleon said, that there is no such word as 'impossible.' It seems that no fortress is absolutely impregnable in the face of

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

RUSSIANS AWAITING ATTACK IN A BLAZING SUN.

THE MEN ARE PUTTING CLIPS OF CARTRIDGES INTO THEIR MAGAZINES.

determined attack. The Japanese have not yet taken Port Arthur, but they have taken several of the outer forts, and apparently must in time take the innermost citadel. It is a question of time; to take the place means necessarily a terrible amount of bloodshed, and the best way in this case is the slow and sure.

CHAPTER XXIII

TWO NAVAL SORTIES

On August 10 the whole of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur came out, slowly and cautiously feeling the way through the roadstead, where the Japanese had been continually planting mines. Small steamers of shallow draught, likely to pass over the dangers unhurt, went first, with large drag-nets towing astern, to sweep the sea of mines. Notwithstanding this precaution, the armoured cruiser *Bayan* was struck, and had to put back into port with a big hole knocked in her forward compartment. The rest of the ships steamed towards the south, and the Japanese fast cruisers on watch ten miles away immediately sent word by wireless telegraph to Admiral Togo. At full speed came the whole Japanese fleet then available, several cruisers being away on other duty, and the first thing to do was to get between the Russian ships and their home, to cut them off. This had been tried often, and the Russians had always managed to get back in time, but now they did not. The Japanese, rejoicing that they at last had the foe in the open sea, singled out at once the most formidable ships, and attacked vigorously at extreme range. The battle-ships *Tsarevitch*, *Retvizan*, *Pobieda*, *Peresviet*, *Sevastopol*, and *Poltava*, all of which carried 12-inch guns,

made a wide circle to come round to Port Arthur again from the south, but the *Tsarevitch* got separated, and the Japanese immediately concentrated on it.

The fight lasted from one o'clock until sunset, all the ships steaming first south, then eastward, and finally northward towards Port Arthur. The Russians were at first formed in line, battleships leading; the Japanese came up behind, between them and the land, and kept in line, nearly parallel, and a little astern. The Russian fast cruisers *Askold* and *Novik*, and the armoured cruiser *Pallada*, together with the destroyers, soon left the rear of the line, as they were getting the worst of the bombardment; and this was the beginning of the confusion in the Russian formation. All the ships had originally been keeping about ten knots, but as soon as the Japanese fire became too hot, each ship made what speed it could, none, however, doing more than three-quarters of its supposed full speed. Thus it was a running fight, in a circle of seventy or a hundred miles' circumference, and at last the greater part of the Russians got back under the shelter of their forts, where the Japanese had no desire to follow too closely. But even those that got back had received very severe injuries, while they lost several ships.

The *Tsarevitch* was most injured of all. Her bridge was destroyed by a shell, which killed Admiral Witgert and several officers. Another shell wrecked a gun and severely wounded Rear-Admiral Massulitch; a third struck the ship right on the water-line, creating great havoc inside, and making it difficult to stop the inrush of water. Another shell damaged her steering gear, and then all hope of rejoining the rest of the squadron and getting back to Port Arthur was gone.

The *Tsarevitch* kept on a southerly course, and some of the other Russians followed—the cruisers *Diana*, *Askold*, and *Novik*, and several destroyers. The rest of the fleet by half-past four seemed to be well on the way towards their harbour, and the Japanese therefore left them, and kept on after the *Tsarevitch* and her consorts. These soon separated, and the big battleship was chased and shelled continuously until dark. She made her way along the Shantung coast, and next morning got into the friendly shelter of Kiaochow. There she was followed by two destroyers. It was found that all the vessels were too badly damaged to be fit for sea, and under the neutrality law they were disarmed and laid up till the end of the war.

The *Novik* also got into Kiaochow, where a steamer laden with coal had been waiting for several weeks. In a few hours the warship moved out of the harbour limits, coaled there, and steamed away again. She was afterwards seen passing the Kurile Islands, and the news was promptly communicated to Japan. Two cruisers went in pursuit, the *Chitose* and *Tsushima*; they found her at last hiding in Korsakoff Bay, at the southern end of Saghalien Island. She had gone in to inquire by telegraph about the prospect of joining the Vladivostok fleet, which was supposed to be blockaded. After a short fight with the two pursuing cruisers, the little *Novik* was run ashore in a sinking condition.

The *Diana* also failed to get back to Port Arthur; she escaped to Saigon, and was disarmed.

The *Askold* and a destroyer, *Grosovoi*, reached Shanghai, and for a long time declined to disarm or leave. Ultimately it was made clear that a flagrant breach of China's neutrality like that would simply

TIENTSIN
CHIHLI
TAKU
GULF OF LIAOTUNG
NEWCHWANG
GULF OF PECHILI
LIAOTUNG
Yellow River
PORTARTHUR
Yalu R
SHANTUNG
CHEFOO
Reshitelny
Askold
Boyarin
Gaidamak
KIAOCHOW
WEIHAIWEI
Tsarevitch, Novik & 2 Destroyers
KOREA
CHEMULPO
YELLOW SEA
MOKPO
MASAMPO
FUSAN
Rurik sunk Aug 14
Yangtse River
Askold & Grozovoi
SHANGHAI
QUELPART
TSUSHIMA
Japanese Transports sunk 15-6
SHIMONOSEKI STRAITS
IKISHIMA
SASEBO
NAGASAKI
Diana's Course to Saigon
Novik's Course to Sagahalien
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NAVAL OPERATIONS

justify Japan in blockading Shanghai, and after twelve days they hauled down their flags and proceeded to dismantle. Two destroyers were beached in a sinking condition near Weihaiwei, and their crews were taken care of by the British.

One destroyer, the *Reshtelny*, went to Chefoo, and was followed by two Japanese destroyers, which waited twenty-four hours, and then sent an officer to investigate. The time was about 3 a.m. on the 12th. The Russian officer protested that the Japanese had no right to come on board or interfere, on the ground that the destroyer was dismantled, and in the care of the Chinese authorities under the law of neutrality. The Japanese denied the disarming, and the Russians thereupon heaved the Japanese off the deck into the sea and exploded the ship's powder-magazine, the crew all swimming ashore. The Japanese then took the *Reshtelny* in tow and put to sea, claiming her as a lawful prize. A curious incident came to light in connection with her. She landed several non-combatants at Chefoo, including one lady. These passengers had left Port Arthur evidently with the knowledge that the ships were not to return there, but were to make a dash for some other port. It therefore seems that the original intention must have been to go in a body to Vladivostok, and that the vigour of Admiral Togo's attack demoralized the Russians. There seems to be no reason why the majority turned back to Port Arthur, except that they were too much damaged to go on.

When the result of the Port Arthur squadron sortie became known, the Vladivostok squadron made a similar attempt to break through the Japanese lines and reach a neutral port. Admiral Kamimura's

fleet had been all the time guarding the straits between Japan and Korea, with his headquarters at the island of Tsushima. Early in the morning of August 14 he was informed by wireless telegraph that one of his small scouting cruisers had seen the three fast cruisers *Rossia*, *Rurik* and *Gromoboi*, coming towards the straits. The morning was very foggy for an hour or more, but as the mist lifted a little he sighted them, and immediately opened fire. The Russians turned back towards Vladivostok, and there ensued a running fight that lasted about five hours. The Japanese ships were the *Izumo* and *Azuma*, *Iwate* and *Tokiwa*, and after a little while the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho* raced to the scene of action, having caught the wireless summons. The *Rurik* could not keep up with the other two Russians, and received most of the Japanese fire. Soon her steering gear was disabled, then her engines were damaged, and by about nine o'clock her masts and funnels had gone. She was pierced in several places on and below the water-line aft, and was labouring heavily. The *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*, far ahead, turned back to do what they could to help, but the fire of the Japanese was too accurate and destructive, and they had to leave her to her fate. The four fastest Japanese ships followed at top speed, leaving the *Takachiho* and *Naniwa* to finish the *Rurik*. She fought to the last, but without being able to inflict any serious injury on her foes. About ten o'clock she sank, stern first, her whole crew being thrown into the water, for she had no boats left intact. The Japanese ships' boats and torpedo-boats were very promptly on the scene, and picked up over 600 men, many of them badly

wounded and lashed to planks to keep them afloat. It is on record that the Japanese saved even the ship's canary.

The *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*, though they managed to get back into Vladivostok, were almost as much damaged as the *Rurik* had been; and Admiral Kamimura's squadron, like Admiral Togo's, was not materially injured. It was frequently noticed that, when Russian shells did fall on deck, they seldom exploded, and on examination they were found to be old and deteriorated. Thus, the damage they were able to do was very small by contrast with the tremendous effects of the Japanese Shimose shells.

The events of these few days practically ended the Russian squadrons. The ships which did get back to port were so battered that their fighting efficiency was almost gone. Ordinary sympathy for the losers in a fight is much modified in this case, because the Russian naval commanders had committed several reprehensible acts, and had not done much to earn commendation. The Vladivostok squadron sank several small Japanese trading vessels—which was legitimate, but not glorious; and in sinking them the Russians were several times guilty of taking life needlessly. They also sank several troopships—the *Kinshiu* near Gensan on April 26, and the *Hitachi*, *Sado*, and *Izumi* on June 15 in the Strait of Tsushima. In all these cases it appears that the Russians, after taking as many Japanese as were willing to surrender, shelled and torpedoed the ships, and made no effort to pick up any of the men who were left struggling in the water. Lastly, the Vladivostok squadron had gone round by the north and made a raid on the east

coast of Japan, stopping neutral ships to search for contraband. This raid resulted in the seizure of the British steamers *Calchas*, *Allanton*, *Cheltenham*, and some others, besides a German—the *Arabia;* while one British ship, the *Knight Commander*, and one German, the *Thea*, were sunk off-hand, and tried by a 'Prize Court' afterwards. A worse outrage was committed by one of the Port Arthur fleet in sinking the British steamer *Hipsang* on July 16, on her way from Newchwang to Chefoo. There was no cause or justification whatever, and the ship was torpedoed without a moment's warning, several lives being lost. Whatever excuses it may be possible to find for such actions of the Russian navy, it is impossible to admire them, or to feel much sorrow at the virtual annihilation of the two squadrons so distinguished.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BATTLE OF LIAOYANG

Liaoyang is in the middle of a very broad, rolling plain, with no hill on it more than 200 feet high for about fifteen miles in each direction. Across the plain from north to south runs the railway, and the river Taitse follows a lazy, tortuous course from east to west to join the Hun River, which comes down from Moukden and runs into the great Liao about thirty miles away. Where the railway crosses the Taitse, nearly at right angles, is the big city of Liaoyang, on slightly rising ground. The city is the most ancient in Manchuria. Its walls are nearly two miles along each side of the square, for they were built in the days when defenders of cities required to have inside the walls cornfields enough to support the whole population during a siege that might continue for ten years. The present population is about 50,000 in ordinary times. The Russian army encamped chiefly outside, in positions convenient for the defence of an outer ring of fortifications constructed since the war began. The place is well situated for strategic purposes, since the wide sweep of the plains facilitates the manœuvring of an army. Liaoyang was at one time selected as the northern capital of Korea, when that country was at the height of its power and glory. Then came war

Photo by C. O. Bulla, by permission of "The Sphere."

A Russian Battery on the heights overlooking the Liao plain.

with the northern kingdom of China, about the time when King Alfred ruled in England, and the Liao dynasty ruled over this part of the country.

There is not much to be seen in the city recalling its ancient glories, but there is one very prominent object visible for many miles round, namely, a stately pagoda at the north-west corner of the city. The railway does not enter the city itself, but a modern suburb has sprung up outside the walls near the station. The Russians had been busy since February constructing forts making nearly a complete circle two or three miles outside the walls; and for their convenience they made gaps in the city walls wherever they wanted to take a short cut. New roads, connecting the forts with each other and with the centre, were made, and in many places protected with breastworks of earth. Altogether fifteen separate forts were made, mainly on the east and south. The vast extent of the fertile plain was cut and seamed in hundreds of places, trenches being made at intervals of two or three hundred yards all over it. Villages are not a mile apart in this rich agricultural region, and almost every village happens to have some strategic value. One is at a bridge over a small stream, another is where two main roads cross, and so on; therefore scarcely a village was without some military force, scarcely a cornfield without a trench, for miles around.

The Russians had altogether over 200,000 troops in and about Liaoyang, and it was hoped that the force would suffice to check the Japanese advance at last, and perhaps inflict a severe blow on it. General Kuropatkin had strong outposts along every road towards the south and east, with instructions to harass

the advance of the enemy, but not to do more than that. So long as the Japanese had the hills close behind them, no decisive blow could be given. When they were well into the plains the big battle would begin.

But the Japanese also had their plan. They wished to work round to the north of Liaoyang, to cut the railway before beginning the general action. The railway and the river formed a rough St. George's Cross, and the Japanese advance was from south, south-east, and east. The whole question from their point of view was whether they could get over the river and on to the railway; and that was practically all that the battle amounted to, for as soon as the Russians found that the Japanese had forced the passage of the river, General Kuropatkin ordered a hasty retreat before the line could be cut. The fight continued while the retreat was in progress, but it was mere killing: the decision had been made already. The Russians never tried to hold Liaoyang itself. They tried to prevent the enemy from getting forward to pass Liaoyang, and when he had shown that he could pass, the defenders practically gave up the contest at once, so far as concerned the defence of Liaoyang, but they had to keep on fighting until their army could make good its retreat. The Japanese, on the other hand, would not have pressed the attack on Liaoyang until after establishing themselves to the north of it; but on finding that the Russians were retiring already, they pressed the attack at all points, in order to inflict a maximum amount of injury while the enemy was at a disadvantage. Thus the battle was not really decisive. It was a valuable contribution towards Japan's ultimate success, but no more.

The battle was one of the longest in history, for it occupied nine days and nights. It may even be judged to have taken twelve days, for the Fengwhancheng army, under General Kuroki, began trying to force the passage of the Taitse River, at a place ten miles east of Liaoyang, on August 24; and from that time until September 4 the fighting was kept up night and day all round Liaoyang, the Japanese troops entering the city on the 4th. The crossing of the river was most stubbornly contested by General Stackelberg's division, and the Japanese lost heavily there. The river was much swollen by recent rains, and was quite unfordable. The Russians had managed to remove or destroy every bridge and boat for many miles along the river, and the Japanese were limited to their own portable pontoons. The Taitse is 100 to 200 yards wide, and the flat lands on both sides were covered with luxuriant crops of corn, chiefly a sort of giant millet called kaoliang, which frequently grows 15 feet high, and is seldom less than 10 feet when full grown, as it was at this time of the year. In many places over which the Japanese would have to advance the Russians had cut the corn, depriving the attacking force of cover to a very serious extent, while the defenders had all the advantage. However, it is not possible to cut all the corn in the country at short notice, and the kaoliang did aid the Japanese in turn, though not before they had driven the enemy out of it, at a cost to themselves that must have run into thousands.

The fighting along the banks of the Taitse lasted from August 24 to August 30, and at last the Japanese managed to get over. That was the beginning of the end. General Stackelberg soon found himself com-

pelled to retire before an ever-increasing force of Japanese, who streamed across the country regardless of danger, racing to get round the flank of the defence. On hearing of Stackelberg's retirement, Kuropatkin waited no longer. All available rolling-stock had been got ready on the railway, and the exodus commenced. Stocks of flour and corned beef, reserve ammunition, and many tons of other supplies were moved out, while troops were being gradually called in from point after point, hastily entrained, and taken out to Moukden, forty miles away, as fast as the engines could take them. A car will only hold about 100 at the very most, and a train of ten cars cannot travel at express speed on this line. So the removal of over 200,000 men, with cannon and all sorts of stores, was an enormous task. It certainly speaks well for the Russians that they did it so well, with a furious battle raging all the time.

As soon as the Japanese on the north crossed the Taitse, the army on the south began to press forward, both in front and on the left (west) side. But it was already too late to achieve the main object—the capture or destruction of the Russian army. On the 30th, Kuroki's left wing, which had not yet crossed the river, but remained to keep in touch with the other forces, combined with the armies of General Oku and General Nozu, and pressed forward to storm the outermost trenches, four miles from the city, extending in a semicircle from the river right round to the river again. Part of General Oku's army also managed to force its way across the Taitse, as if to approach the railway from the west side. Here again the Japanese lost very heavily.

Photo by Ruddiman Johnston.

HIGH-ANGLE FIRE AT LIAOYANG WITH A CAPTURED RUSSIAN GUN.

Photo by Ruddiman Johnston.

RUINS OF LIAOYANG STATION.

During the night of the 28th the passage of the river was accomplished, and the 29th was occupied in hard fighting to the north-west of Liaoyang. The Russians had a very strong force on some rising ground just west of the railway, and General Oku had a running fight extending several miles parallel with the line. The Russian troops moved out from the city, further and further up the line, as the Japanese also kept edging further up, trying to get past them and reach the railway. So on September 1 there were two roughly parallel lines of Japanese stretching away north, moving as quickly as they could and fighting their way forward, and between them was a strip of country not ten miles wide, with the railway running up the centre of it, trains carrying away the Russians as fast as they could go, and Russian troops lining both sides of the railway, holding the Japanese at arm's length—that is to say, at fighting range. But the Russians kept on extending north as fast as the Japanese could, and the railway remained untouched. All day on September 1 there was heavy artillery play at every point. The Japanese succeeded in completely wrecking and setting on fire the Liaoyang railway-station and some of the storage-sheds near it; but the Russians had by this time laid rails for another siding a mile further north, and used that as a point of embarkation.

This was a new kind of race, in which the Russian army, flying for life, had to sacrifice its rear-guard, as travellers beset by wolves in the Siberian forest sometimes kill one of their horses to cause delay to the pursuers. The troops defending the forts and trenches had to wait till the last; the rest all got away, and

almost all the guns were removed before the men were allowed to withdraw from the fortifications nearest to the city wall. From all outlying positions the men were drawn in on the night of the 31st, the Japanese keeping up the attack with redoubled energy as they found place after place falling into their hands. All day long on the 1st, all the night, all the 2nd, and all *that* night, the fight was kept up, and the Russians kept retiring until the 3rd. On the evening of the 3rd, the last of the Russians had left the city and every place around it and crossed the river; the last party blew up the railway-bridge, wrecking the masonry abutment on the north bank of the river. On the morning of September 4, the Japanese marched into Liaoyang, and found it and all the earthworks near it empty of Russians, save the dead.

Pressing on, the Japanese followed up the enemy's retreat without resting. The two parallel columns converged on the line of retreat, and the Russians, as they retired, lost terribly. The rear-guard had, of course, not the good fortune to be whisked away by train out of danger, but had to fight every mile of the way on foot up to Yentai Station, about fifteen miles north of the river. Here a small branch railway runs to a coal-mine about three miles away from the main line. The Russians made a strong stand in this region, holding long lines of trenches from the main railway-line as far as the coal-mine and some low hills in the vicinity. But though the defence of this place was as obstinate as usual, it had no strategic importance beyond delaying the pursuit and covering the retreat of the main force to Moukden.

The Japanese captured a good deal of booty which

there had not been time to carry off to the north: about 6,000 bags of flour, rice, etc., 18,000 tins of beef, 3,000 rifles, nearly 2,000,000 rounds of cartridge, 10,000 3-inch and other shells, and an enormous quantity of other materials. In the whole series of fights, from August 24 to September 4 inclusive, the Russians are believed to have lost over 20,000 men in killed and wounded, while the Japanese casualties are officially reported at 3,592 killed and 13,947 wounded.

The Liaoyang battle undoubtedly proved disappointing to the Japanese and their sympathisers. Extravagant writers had predicted a Sedan, a Waterloo, and the disappointment was chiefly the product of over-expectation. If the Russians lost many men and much booty, the Japanese also had lost men and had expended a vast amount of money, and remained not very much to the good. The position was no great gain: Kuropatkin was so much the nearer to his base, and the Japanese so much further from theirs. They could probably count on capturing Moukden before the advent of winter, and thus be in effective occupation of Southern Manchuria. Certainly that must be accounted a tangible gain. On the other hand, Russia had accomplished something in demonstrating how much it would cost Japan to secure a victory so far inland. The actual cost to each combatant, and the proportionate effect on the resources of each, could not be estimated with any certainty. But Russia's principal fighting power remained, to all intents and purposes, unimpaired. The railway was bringing troops and stores into Northern Manchuria all the time—not as fast as had been originally expected, but in the months of blundering and confusion the railway department had

been learning how to do better—the whole organization was improving with hard experience. Even if the Russians could not win a battle, they could repeat the performance of Liaoyang an indefinite number of times, and how long could Japan keep it up? If it took all the forces of the British Empire two years to win this kind of elusive game against a handful of Boers in a small area like the Transvaal, how long would it take Japan to make an end of Kuropatkin in Siberia?

For the significance of the Liaoyang fight lay in its very clear vindication of Kuropatkin's plan of campaign—a campaign of wearing out, of costly and indecisive battles, which would give time for Russia's great weight and power of endurance to take effect. Russian newspapers, whether rightly or wrongly, spoke of a ten years' war. In that time, certainly, it would be possible to mass troops in Manchuria far outnumbering the Japanese; it would be possible to develop and improve the railway to any desired pitch, and to build more railways and more fleets. Meantime Japan could not greatly hurt Russia. The army in the East could adhere to the plan of skilful rear-guard actions, holding one position just long enough to let the main body reach the next position, damaging the enemy as much as possible, and receiving as little damage as possible in return. It seemed as if there could be no end to this style of fighting—no end except the wearing out of the Japanese.

But Japan knew all that before the war began, and determined not to be worn out. Having driven Russia from the seaboard, Japan will probably not attempt any further conquests. Moukden is as far as she need

Photo by Ruddiman Johnston.

RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE CORPSES IN A TRENCH.

Photo by Ruddiman Johnston.

AFTER LIAOYANG.

go. She has been attacking, and Russia defending, up to this; now Japan can rest on the defensive, and it will be for Russia either to assume the attack or discontinue the war. The few occasions on which the Russians have attacked have perhaps not been in circumstances affording a fair test; but, at any rate, it is likely that the Japanese will hold their own, and that if the next phase of this war is a wearing-out process, it will be Russia that will suffer.

THE END

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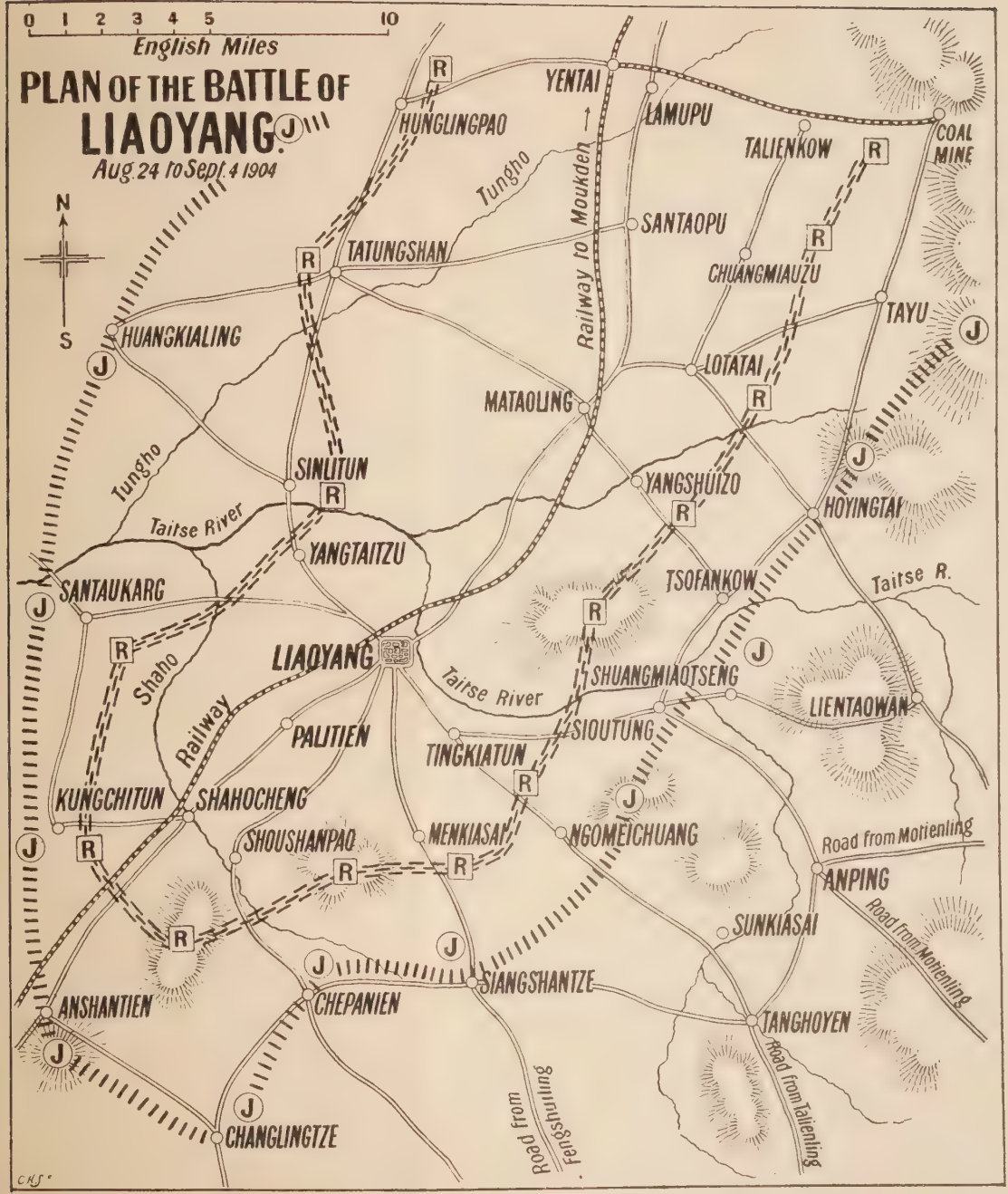

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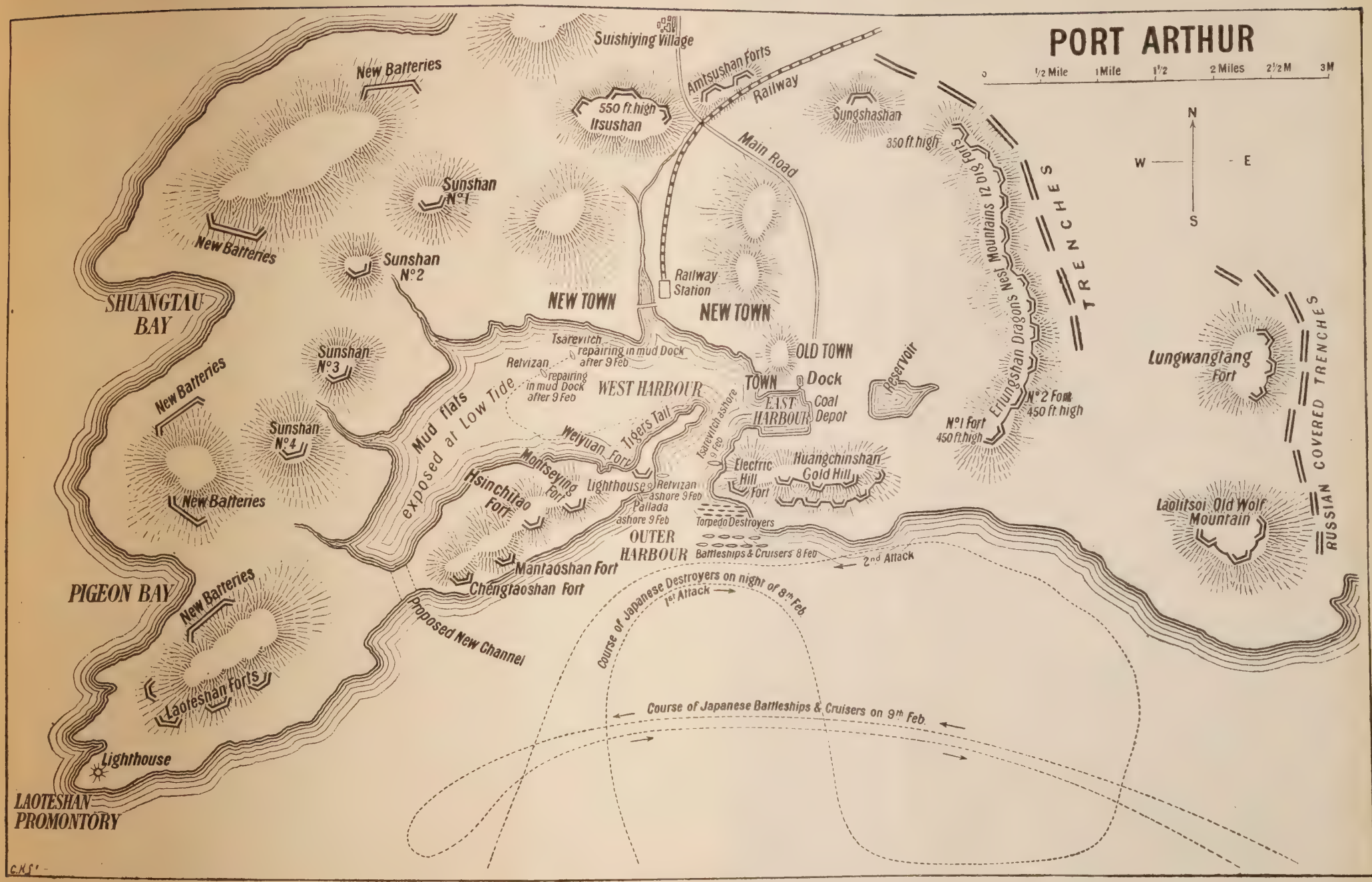

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